

DAY, MARCH 25  
Rising divorce  
rate attracts  
concern in  
Beijing (AP) —  
China's divorce  
rate has risen to  
1.9 per cent, the  
highest in the world,  
according to a survey  
by the Chinese  
Academy of Social  
Sciences.

Pilot flies  
Taiwanese  
to wrong  
country

Army desert  
with 7 wives  
53 mistresses  
arrested

Sweden  
law banning  
prostitution

## Helms assails Syria, Arafat

TEL AVIV (R) — U.S. Senator Jesse Helms said the Syrians were "murderers" and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) had failed as head of Palestinian self-rule, in an interview published on Friday. Mr. Helms, chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, told the Israeli daily newspaper Yediot Aharonoth he stood by his opposition to the stationing of U.S. peace-keeping troops on the Israeli-held Golan Heights in a future peace deal. He added: "The Syrians are murderers, as simple as that, and that can be proven. They were involved in the attack at the Marines' camp in Beirut, an attack that killed 241 Americans. Apparently, they were involved also in the attack on Pan Am 103, that killed 270 innocent people." Asked to rate Mr. Arafat's leadership and to assess whether he was "deserving" of U.S. support and foreign aid, Mr. Helms said: "Up to now, Arafat has failed as the leader of the Palestinian Authority." Mr. Helms told the Hebrew-language paper that Mr. Arafat had "thrown to the wind" much of the international aid and trust he received immediately after the September 1993 Israeli-PLO deal.

## Israel seals Hebron building

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli troops on Friday sealed shut a building at a junction outside the occupied West Bank town of Hebron from which gunmen shot at an Israeli bus on Sunday, killing two Jewish settlers, Palestinians said. Palestinians said the building housed three shops, closed down by the sealing. Israel on Thursday eased a round-the-clock curfew on the 110,000 residents of Hebron imposed after the ambush. The army said residents would now be confined between 6 p.m. and 5 a.m. Palestinians condemn mass curfews and building sealings and demolitions as collective punishment.

## 'Islamic Salvation Front' in Gaza

GAZA CITY (AFP) — A pamphlet signed by the "Islamic Salvation Front," the same name as a fundamentalist Algerian group, was issued for the first time Friday in the autonomous Gaza Strip. There were no immediate indications as to the authors of the leaflets, which were distributed mainly in the Nuseirat refugee camp. The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, denied any link with the group which has never been heard of before. The leaflet called for armed uprising against Israel. "Every settler and every Jew in Palestine is a target," it said. The group said it was coordinating with Izzedine Al Kassar, the armed wing of Hamas, and described itself as the "fighting front of the Islamic mujahideen in Palestine."

## Kuwait oil workers suspend strike

KUWAIT (AP) — Kuwaiti oil workers Friday suspended their seven-day-old strike in exchange for a government pledge to consider their demands for promotions and pay raises, a union spokesman said. Ismail Al Kandari of the union's board of directors told the Associated Press that the suspension was agreed during a meeting between labour leaders and Oil Minister Abdul Mohsen Al Madaj. Mr. Kandari said the government promised to consider the union's demands but "insisted that there will be no solution without a suspension of the strike." "We have suspended the strike because there will be a meeting tomorrow with the oil minister and the minister of social affairs and labour."

## Turkish mosques attacked in Germany

BONN (AFP) — Two Turkish mosques were the target of arson attacks in Germany early Friday by presumed right-wing extremists. In the Ruhr city of Essen, a mosque recently established in a single-storey former warehouse was completely destroyed by a fire which appeared to have been deliberately started in different parts of the building, police said. At Rothenburg-ob-der-Tauber, in Bavaria, a firebomb was thrown at another building containing a mosque, but bounced off and exploded in the street without causing serious damage. Turkish interests in Germany have been the target of repeated arson attacks in connection with the war in Turkey's Kurdish region.

## 28 Nigerians held in Cairo

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian authorities arrested 28 Nigerians Friday at Cairo airport when they were caught travelling in forged British, Dutch and Austrian passports, police said. The group had arrived Thursday from Lagos hoping to travel to Israel. They admitted buying the passports from a network of forgers at an average price of \$3,000 each, police added. The passports had all been stolen and the photographs of the true owners replaced by those of the Nigerians.

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## Gore urges end to violence, unveils aid for Palestinians

### Arafat, U.S. vice-president meet in Jericho

JERICHO (Agencies) — U.S. Vice-President Al Gore Friday announced a \$65 million aid package for the Palestinians and urged an end to anti-Israeli violence as he met Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat here.

Mr. Gore told reporters after a one-hour meeting with Mr. Arafat that the Palestinians would also have preferential access to the U.S. market for certain products. "We agreed that one of the most important dividends of the peace process for the Palestinians is the economic development of the West Bank and Gaza Strip," he said.

And he stressed the need for Palestinians to step up the fight against militant violence in return. "I thank Arafat for announcing he would pursue suspected criminals against the peace process," Mr. Gore said in a reference to the PLO chief's decision to create a high court to judge those accused of violently trying to undermine the peace process.

"It's the first steps to control violence and to defeat

the enemies of the peace process," Mr. Gore said.

Mr. Arafat replied: "We carry the heavy responsibility for protecting the peace of the brave from its enemies from all sides. We have taken and will continue to take measures to prevent them."

"In your name allow me to welcome the American vice-president... he must help us and stand by us until the implementation of the agreement and the establishment of our state with its capital Jerusalem," Mr. Arafat said.

Mr. Arafat said regarding the Palestinian claim on Jerusalem: "He who doesn't like it can drink from the Gaza sea, he can drink from the Dead Sea."

The square was draped with banners, many hailing Jerusalem. One read: "Jericho is the road to Jerusalem."

Mr. Arafat plans to stay four days in Jericho where he will chair a meeting of his cabinet on Saturday and meet West Bank leaders on Sunday and Monday.

Mr. Gore, who was welcomed by a parade of honour, said he was "delighted to be here in Jericho, probably

the oldest known city on the earth."

Jericho was the last leg of a tour which also took him to Egypt, Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Mr. Gore's visit to Jericho was the first by a foreign dignitary to the tiny autonomous enclave on the West Bank.

It was also the first time Mr. Arafat had travelled to Jericho since a brief visit on July 5 shortly after returning from exile to take charge of self-rule.

Mr. Arafat thanked Mr. Gore for the aid announcement and said "after your visit we will be able to gain more and more benefit of the peace process."

The aid package is to be spread over several years in two separate programmes; \$41 million will go to improve water supplies and waste water management in the self-rule Gaza Strip; a further \$25 million is to be spent on emergency projects to improve infrastructure and create jobs in the strip.

Two protocols were signed for the immediate release of two \$4 million loans to fund the tarmacing of roads and

help needy people in refugee camps as part of the emergency projects funds.

"President (Bill) Clinton authorized me to proclaim now that the General System of Preference will be open to the Palestinians which is unusual in the region and of great value," Mr. Gore added.

"It offers duty-free access to the U.S. market for specified products from developing countries and territories."

He recalled that Washington promised \$500 million of aid to the Palestinians in 1995-98 of which \$100 million would be put up this year.

Jericho was draped with both the Palestinian and U.S. flags for the arrival of Mr. Gore and Mr. Arafat on Friday.

Mr. Arafat told a 2,000-strong crowd ahead of the talks that he would ask Washington to help implement the autonomy deal with Israel.

Mr. Arafat struck a defiant note as he said to loud applause: "Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine, whether they (the Israelis) like it or

(Continued on page 7)

## Israelis see Palestinian state emerging from talks

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Increasing numbers of Israelis are convinced the autonomy talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) will lead to the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, an opinion poll published Friday showed.

A survey of 500 people conducted by the Dahaf Institute showed that 73 per cent thought the peace process was leading to the establishment of a Palestinian state, while 23 per cent said the opposite and four per cent had no opinion.

The poll, published in the Yediot Aharonoth daily, also found that 42 per cent of Israelis favoured continuing talks with the PLO unconditionally on extending Palestinian self-rule on the West Bank.

Twenty-two per cent demanded that the PLO first "deal with terrorism" and 34 per cent wanted the negotiations to be halted. Two per

cent had no opinion.

The left-wing Meretz Party called Friday for the creation of a Palestinian state, backing one of its leaders, Environment Minister Yossi Sarid. Meretz is part of the ruling coalition.

Last week Mr. Sarid said a Palestinian state would emerge "within a few months," but Minister Yitzhak Rabin rejected the idea.

At the other end of the political spectrum, former Defence Minister Ariel Sharon of the right-wing Likud said recently he would prefer a "territorial compromise" on the West Bank to autonomy.

"It would be a lesser evil, since Palestinian autonomy is leading to a state over the whole of the West Bank, whereas a territorial compromise will lead to a state only in part of it," Mr. Sharon said.

Mina Tzernach, head of the Dahaf Institute, said the

latest findings "show the peace process still enjoys vast support among the public."

Ms. Tzernach said around 60 per cent of Israelis favoured negotiations after the PLO-Israeli declaration of principles on self-rule was signed in September 1993.

"They are still in favour, but many want security guarantees," she stressed.

Support for the peace process in Israel has risen since January, when it reached its lowest point in the wake of a suicide bombing which killed 21 Israelis north of Tel Aviv.

If elections were to be held now, 40 per cent would vote for Mr. Rabin, compared with 34 per cent for his right-wing Likud rival Benjamin Netanyahu, according to the poll.

Another potential right-wing candidate, former army chief Raphael Eitan, would get 13 per cent of the vote, while another 13 per cent

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## Ekeus rejects new U.S. charges of Iraq weapons

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Rolf Ekeus, the U.N. official in charge of disarming Iraq, said on Friday he was not treating seriously U.S. charges that Baghdad was rebuilding its weapons programme.

"We do not recognise that," Mr. Ekeus said when asked about the charges.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright on Tuesday showed senators aerial pictures that she said indicated Iraq was rebuilding its weapons programme and told them Iraq continues to devote money and manpower to rebuilding programme's infrastructure.

Mr. Ekeus was speaking in Baghdad, where he was to hold talks with Iraqi arms officials to solve outstanding issues, particularly with regards to Baghdad's past research on biological warfare.

The visit is his second within a month and is his last to the Iraqi capital before making a report to the Security Council on April 10 that is key to the possible lifting or easing of the U.N. trade and oil embargo imposed on Baghdad after its forces invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

The U.N. Security Council voted March 13 to extend sanctions against Iraq for a further two months, but renewed efforts to ease or lift the sanctions are expected later this spring.

Mr. Ekeus' report is expected to declare that a long-term monitoring system to ensure Iraq complies with the 1991 Gulf war resolutions is finally operational.

"I am very hopeful. It does not depend on us but on the result of our work here," he said.

Mr. Ekeus, who is head of the U.N. Special Commission on Iraq, said he was hopeful that his team of eight experts would solve any outstanding problems.

"I have a big team of experts with me here and we will focus upon sorting out remaining problems," he said.

U.N. arms inspectors say Iraq has not accounted for 20-30 tonnes of so-called complex "growth media" that could be used to produce two to three tonnes of bacterial material for biological weapons.

The commission charges that Iraq imported in 1988-89 millions of dollars-worth of

growth media, in which germs can grow.

The U.N. team says it could not declare Iraq had fully complied with the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire terms on disarmament without full knowledge of what happened to the material.

Asked whether he was still facing serious obstacles in his attempts to disarm Iraq, Mr. Ekeus, a former Swedish diplomat, said: "They are possible to solve (and) in this sense they are not serious, but it depends on the Iraqi attitude to settle them."

He said his discussions with the Iraqis would not only be confined to Baghdad's biological warfare file. "We will deal with all areas," he said.

Mr. Ekeus said the presence of two American prisoners in Iraq for illegally entering the country from Kuwait was not a matter of concern to him.

Mr. Ekeus is expected to meet General Amer Rashid, head of Iraq's Military Industrialisation Commission, later on Friday.

On Thursday, Iraq for the first time allowed Western diplomats to visit the two

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## Israel, PNA wage truck war

EREZ (Agencies) — Israel on Friday lifted a ban on Palestinian trucks entering from Gaza but new, strict security checks kept hundreds of lorries loaded with perishable produce waiting for hours in the sun, witnesses said.

Israel barred all vehicles from Gaza after finding an explosive-laden truck from the self-rule enclave in southern Israel on Monday.

The Palestinian National Authority set ban-related losses due to trucks not being able to get out at \$3 million daily.

In retaliation for the Israeli ban, the Palestinian Authority turned back two Israeli trucks loaded with bananas on Friday.

"From now on, we will prevent consignments of fruit and vegetables from Israel entering the Gaza Strip," said Mahmoud Abu Samra, Palestinian Agriculture Ministry official.

"Today we turned back two trucks. If the Israelis continue to block our exports to Israel, we will also continue to turn theirs back," he warned.

Israel only allowed in four trucks and three taxis from Gaza on Friday.

"We can no longer accept imports of Israeli products worth \$8 million a day when we can no longer export our \$3 million a day worth of fruit and vegetables," said Mr. Abu Samra.

On Wednesday, the Israeli agriculture ministry said it would allow 200 trucks a day to enter, starting on Friday. The number of trucks is the same as allowed in before the vehicle ban.

But by mid-morning on Friday, witnesses said that since dawn only one truck had actually made it into Israel. Trucks had to pass checks at three Palestinian roadblocks before reaching Israeli forces at the Erez checkpoint.

"You are responsible, you are Palestinians, you should let us pass," one trucker shouted at police at one of the Palestinian roadblocks.

Another trucker, Fayez Salim, waiting in line, said from the cab of his vehicle: "We have been here since last night."

An Israeli army spokesman said a report on the number of trucks actually allowed in on Friday could only be made near the end of the day.



His Majesty King Hussein with French President Francois Mitterrand at the Elysee Palace in Paris on Thursday (AFP photo)

## King's talks with Mitterrand seen to enhance French role

PARIS (Petra) — The diplomatic advisor of French President Francois Mitterrand said Friday His Majesty King Hussein's meeting on Thursday with the French president would enhance the political role France and Europe could play in the Middle East peace process and the economic development of the region.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the advisor said Mr. Mitterrand has affirmed to the King that France, in view of its distinguished relations with the countries of the region, was attempting to advance the peace process and contribute to the economic development of the region.

King Hussein later Thursday left for Los Angeles, to accept an award for peace, before departing for Washington, where he will hold talks with President Bill Clinton and senior administration officials.

The King is accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Noor, Their Royal Highnesses Prince Ali and Prince Hashem, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and military advisor Major General Hmeidi Al Fayez.

The King's meeting with Mr. Mitterrand over lunch on Thursday was described as a largely courtesy visit before the president leaves office in May.

At the meeting, the two leaders discussed bilateral relations, developments in the peace process and issues of common interest.

Following the meeting, the King told journalists discus-

sions also focused on Europe's role in the peace process.

He voiced hope that France will play a bigger role in the peace process and in the economic development process in the region.

He said his talks in Washington would "deal with everything."

The King's meeting with President Clinton is scheduled for March 27.

After his White House meeting, the King will undergo a routine medical check-up at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and then proceed for a visit to Canada beginning April 1.

The King was scheduled to receive the Simon Wiesenthal Centre's annual award and deliver an address at the Centre late Friday in Los Angeles.



Turkish troops body-search a northern Iraqi resident at a checkpoint they have set up on the area (AFP photo)

## Turkish forces bomb Kurdish villages amid mounting concern

DERGALE, Iraq (Agencies) — Turkish warplanes have bombed three Kurdish mountain villages in northern Iraq, destroying several homes and forcing dozens of villagers to flee, correspondents reported Friday.

The raids came in defiance of Western calls to safeguard civilians in Ankara's cross-border operation against separatist rebels.

Six houses in the village of Dergale, 100 kilometres east of the Iraqi border town of Zakho, were badly damaged. Residents said one person was wounded in the air strikes on Wednesday.

"Three planes came and dropped bombs. Then they left and came back and dropped more," Jalal Fund, 40, from Dergale, told Reuters. Nearby villages of Besli and Gulka were also hit by Turkish jets, the villagers said.

Turkish officials had no immediate comment on the reports but earlier insisted there had been no civilian casualties in five days of a land and air operation into northern Iraq to root out Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas, who use bases

there to attack targets inside Turkish territory.

Iraqi Kurdish officials have also accused Turkish troops of looting houses and arresting Kurdish civilians.

PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan claimed that Turkish forces were killing Kurdish refugees and urged the world to pressure Ankara to stop what he called "massacres."

"We urge the international community not to remain silent to these acts of massacres... they should cease condoning the domination of one people by another," he declared in a statement.

Kurds make up one-fifth of Turkey's 60 million population. The PKK launched a campaign for autonomy in 1984 and some 15,000 people have died in the bloodletting.

Some 35,000 Turkish troops, backed by tanks, artillery and air strikes, crossed into the Iraqi Kurds' self-rule enclave where the PKK maintains bases, on Monday in the biggest military operation in the region since the 1991 Gulf war.

Mr. Ocalan, whose current whereabouts are not known, claimed in a statement faxed

to the AP that the Turkish forces were concentrating on attacking camps housing thousands of Kurdish refugees from Turkey rather than going after his guerrillas.

The United States and the European Union have expressed concern for the safety of civilians in the Turkish operation, but stopped short of denouncing it.

In Geneva, U.N. refugee officials joined the chorus of concern over Turkey's intervention in northern Iraq, saying it had triggered a new flight of Kurdish refugees from the battle zone to camps farther south.

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokesman Rupert Colville said the agency was "deeply concerned" over the rights of Kurds in the part of northern Iraq now occupied by Turkish troops, saying it had reports of arrests and transfers back to Turkey.

Mr. Colville said hundreds of refugees had already fled the northern Iraq city of Zakho — in the zone held

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## Electricity generation studies hold promise — professor

By Rima Corthawi  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Among the research projects conducted at Jordanian universities, "the work currently done on the use of semi-conductors in the generation of electricity is highly recommended for its promising outcome in the not-too-distant future" according to Riyadh Ahmad Bitar, physics professor at the University of Jordan.

The Higher Council for Sciences and Technology (HCST) is seriously studying the possibility of allocating funds to support the project. Dr. Bitar said, especially because of the industrial and economic benefits expected from the acquisition of such advanced technology.

For more than three decades, major private and governmental institutions in the U.S. have been consistently supporting and implementing continuous research on the use of semi-conductors in this "clean" energy conversion procedure, as well as for other applications, according to Dr. Bitar.

The importance of this process is that the solar energy used is "renewable," unlike fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and gas, which are finite.

"It is our greatest advantage to be able to provide easy access of the technology to develop alternatives for energy production," Dr. Bitar said.

Photovoltaic cells utilise semi-conducting materials to convert solar energy directly into electricity and without the outlet of any environmentally unfriendly by-products such as are evolved from the burning of fossil fuels for electricity, Dr. Bitar explained.

"Our main aim since the start of the project, a year and few months ago, has been to know the technology for producing thin film semi-conductor materials (specifically, cadmium telluride) to result in efficient and economical conversion," Dr. Bitar said.

Theoretically, cadmium telluride absorbs sunlight effectively, giving 28 per cent

conversion into electricity. "However, this is only in theory; practical efficiency has only amounted to just under 15 per cent in the U.S. but only in small cells," said Dr. Bitar.

Obviously, efficiency decreases at larger scales of production as further imperfections arise with the size and number of the cells used, according to Dr. Bitar.

"In my estimation, a system of around 12 to 13 per cent efficiency can compete with the price of oil, thus reducing the gas-bill," Dr. Bitar said.

Moreover, the workability or life of the system is important in rendering the whole process more cost-effective and economically feasible. Also, according to Dr. Bitar, knowledge of the technology related to the use of semi-conductors (the heart of electronic devices) is industrially very useful because of semi-conductors' diverse application.

"Our project objective is to find the technological know-how to produce a 30 x 30cm functional cell with 8 to 10 per cent efficiency and a life of 10 years within two years from now," he said.

This will pave the way to construct a working module which will be available as an alternative energy source to fall back on especially in the event of inflation in the price of fossil fuels, and also to create environmentally favourable means of energy production, he added.

An increase in energy output of the process is related to the intensity of sunlight, which gives Jordan an advantage considering its favourable weather conditions.

"In our industries we import technology, which leaves us always dependent on the West, to give us second-class technological devices that are basically uneconomical; sometimes even out-dated," Dr. Bitar said.

"Therefore, to implement this project and open a wide door for more technological applications of semi-conductors, even if the photovoltaic cells do not beat the price of oil," is definitely a worthwhile activity," Dr. Bitar concluded.

## Princess Basma chairs Arab delegates meeting

NEW YORK (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma chaired a meeting here for the official Arab delegations taking part in the preparatory committee meeting for the U.N. world conference on women. The meeting held at Princess Basma's initiative on Thursday sought to crystallise an official Arab stand towards the draft work plan which the world conference will discuss in Beijing in September.

The delegations stressed

the importance of coordinating Arab stands at the conference, particularly in relation to the United Nations Convention on eliminating all forms of discrimination against women, which contains some articles which contravene provisions of Islamic law.

The meeting also discussed a working paper presented by the Jordanian delegation, including remarks and amendments to the conference's work plan.

The remarks and amend-

ments are in line with the Arab plan of action, adopted by the regional Arab conference, held in Amman in November 1994.

Participants approved the formation of an inter-Arab contact group, which will be entrusted with coordinating Arab stands during the Beijing conference.

The committee groups Jordan, which will play a coordinating role, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, Sudan and Algeria.

## Jordanian, Iraqi federations of chambers of commerce sign accord

BAGHDAD (Petra) — The Jordanian and Iraqi federations of chambers of commerce have signed an agreement which provides for enhancing economic and commercial ties as well as trade exchange between Jordanian and Iraqi businessmen and commercial establishments.

President of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce Haidar Murad, who is currently heading a 36-member business delegation to Iraq, Friday said the agreement stipulates exchanging information on the two countries' economies, foreign trade, laws governing economic and trade activities and publications.

Mr. Murad, who signed the agreement on the Jordanian side with his Iraqi counterpart Zuhair Abdul Ghafour Yonis, said the agreement calls for increasing the trade exchange between the two countries, opening new scopes of economic cooperation between private sector institutions and provides for

exchanging visits by trade delegations to study prospects of launching ventures.

It also encourages businessmen from both countries to launch joint ventures and facilitates the movement of production elements — personnel, funds, commodities and vehicles — between the two countries in accordance with active laws, Mr. Murad said.

He added that the two sides agreed to hold periodic meetings alternately in Amman and Baghdad to review and follow-up the implementation of the agreement's provisions.

The agreement, he noted, will be active for one year and can be automatically renewed unless one of the two parties expresses the desire to terminate it.

He said the delegation, which left for Baghdad Sunday, met with several senior Iraqi officials, including the ministers of trade and health.

Mr. Murad said members of the delegation also held

separate meetings with Iraqi businessmen to conclude bilateral deals with them.

Discussions with Iraqi officials and businessmen also focused on means of promoting Jordanian-Iraqi cooperation in economic and commercial fields, Mr. Murad said.

The talks also dealt with the international economic summit which will be held in Amman in October with the participation of businessmen and investors from all over the world.

He said the Jordanian delegation extended invitations to Iraqi investors to participate in the Amman summit.

In addition, the Jordanian team briefed Iraqi businessmen on measures taken by the Income Tax Department to introduce laws that promote investments.

He said the Jordanian federation will provide the Iraqi private sector federations and organisations with copies of these laws as soon as they are finalised.

## 'Jordan, Israel hope to conclude treaty sectoral agreements soon'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Negotiations on sectoral agreements between Jordan and Israel are proceeding well and both sides hope to conclude the agreements on time as called for their Oct. 26 peace agreement, the head of the Jordanian side to a panel supervising the implementation of the treaty said Friday.

Hani Al Mulqi, president of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), also said that a committee related to the Jordanian-American-Israeli trilateral commission will meet in Amman on April 3 for a review of progress towards implementation of projects in the Jordan Rift Valley and other related issues.

Dr. Mulqi said Jordanian and Israeli officials would meet one day ahead of the trilateral meeting to review the issues before the commission.

He noted that a company contracted by World Bank was preparing tender documents related to the projects proposed in a programme for Jordan Rift Valley development jointly drawn up by Jordan, the United States and Israel.

The trilateral meeting in turn will prepare for a broader workshop to be held in Amman in late April. That conference will include regional experts as well as the private sector since concrete projects and related feasibility studies with private sector participation are expected to be reviewed at the forum.

The workshop is also part of Jordan's preparations for the Amman economic summit to be held in October.

The joint committee supervising the implementation of



Hani Al Mulqi

the treaty met in the northern Israeli town of Beit Shean on Thursday under the chairmanship of Dr. Mulqi on the Jordanian side and Elhakim Rubinstein on the Israeli side and reviewed progress made by the separate negotiating groups.

The peace treaty calls for three types of accords: the first to be concluded in three months after the ratification of the peace treaty on Nov. 10. These were already signed on Feb. 9 at the Baqoura area in the north. The second are to be concluded in six months i.e. a deadline of May 10, and others to be signed in nine months i.e. Aug. 10.

The negotiations are proceeding well, and both sides hope that we would be able to conclude the accords in time as scheduled in the peace treaty," Dr. Mulqi told the Jordan Times. He referred specific questions on the agreements under discussions to the officials directly involved.

According to sources, Jordan and Israel have made some progress towards settling some of their differences in a trade accord, but outstanding issues involve Israeli reluctance to offer preferential treatment to some Jordanian products in view of the disparity in the economies of the two countries.

However, the sources said, Jordan was optimistic that the differences could be settled.

Reporting Thursday's meeting, where the trade accord was discussed, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said "the two sides made suggestions whereby Jordanian trade and industry can enjoy preferential treatment in the Israeli market."

Ministry of Industry and Trade Under-Secretary Mohammad Smadi is leading the Jordanian side to the negotiations on trade. The talks will resume in Aqaba on April 2.

Also reviewed Thursday were draft accords on the environment and transport. Again, details were not immediately available, but, according to the sources, the transport accord is largely completed but is awaiting agreement between the civil aviation authorities of the two countries.

An accord on air corridors between the aviation authorities was made this month, under which Royal Jordanian started using Israeli airspace. The accord is applicable for a two-month trial period, which ends around the same time that the two sides are obliged to conclude a firm transport accord that would cover civil aviation.

All draft accords will be presented to the two governments for approval before being formally signed.

## Medical association prepares for elections Candidates split over role of politics in JMA

By Beatrix Immentkamp  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Preparations for elections, in April 7 of the president and the 10-member council of the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA) are proceeding amid controversy over the association's role and function, with members divided over whether the association should play a political role or concentrate strictly on its professional duties.

The controversy surfaced when His Majesty King Hussein, in his January letter of designation to Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, admonished Jordanian professional trade associations and unions to adhere to their primary role as guardians and defenders of their members' professional interests, but also at a time when the envisaged process of normalisation with Israel forces a political issue on the association's

agenda.

The JMA is among 12 professional associations which have threatened sanctions ranging from dismissal to disciplinary measures against their 80,000 members who have contacts with Israelis.

The four presidential candidates for this year's JMA election are evenly split over the question of whether the association should remain a forum for political discussion or whether professional issues should take precedence over politics.

In the forefront of those defending the association's right to a political stand and activity is candidate Bassim Dajani, current vice-president of JMA and the candidate of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), who in an interview with the Jordan Times portrayed this issue as the highest on his agenda.

In the opinion of Mohammad Oran, a candidate from the left, not only are all un-

ions in the world political, but politicians are able to run the association in a better and more efficient way. Dr. Oran told the Jordan Times that the association's political and professional activities need not conflict.

Against the involvement of the association in politics are the two independent candidates, Haider Madani and Ghazi Ibrahim.

According to Dr. Ibrahim, there is a widespread mood prevailing among doctors that the association should distance itself from politics. He added that the association's political influence should, if at all, derive from its professional clout.

According to Dr. Madani, party politics have for the last 40 years interfered with the professional interests of the association's members, leading to a deterioration in the professional situation of

many doctors.

In one respect, professional and political concerns do meet. An important professional argument against normalisation is the fear that "medical tourists" patients from other countries who visit Jordan for medical treatment and who constitute between 25 per cent and 35 per cent of all patients treated in the private sector — would, according to Dr. Dajani, "fall prey to (Israeli) propaganda that treatment is better in (Israel) and prefer to be treated there."

Jordan's private medical sector, which provides work to more than 2,000 physicians and has over the last years invested heavily, both in hospital buildings and medical equipment, would stand to suffer great economic losses if medical tourists were to forsake Jordan for Israel.

Other important issues

addressed by the candidates in their campaign include the general need to improve the living standards of physicians, both in the private and public sector, by raising fees and salaries and providing housing, and by creating additional employment opportunities for the growing number of doctors.

Another project proposed in this context is the creation of a hospital where members of the association as well as their families can be treated at low costs. Revenues from this hospital, which would be open to the public, would in turn help to swell the association's coffers.

In an attempt to ensure more effective participation by members in the association's decision-making process, several candidates propose the establishment of a "medical parliament" which would include the heads of

the association's branches in Jordan's major cities as well as representatives of medical specialists' societies from within the association.

The JMA has 7,521 members, 6,596 of which are practising physicians, and 4,800 of which — all those who had paid their dues by the March 10, 1995 deadline — are eligible to vote in the coming elections.

A total of 1,404 of the association's members reside in the West Bank. But West Bank members do not participate in the elections for the presidency, rather they elect their own representative in Jerusalem after elections in Amman, who then becomes a member of the executive board.

So far, there is no indication that West Bank members will be prevented from sending their representative to the board this year.

### HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Anastas Hanania laid to rest

AMMAN (Petra) — Former minister Anastas Hanania, who passed away Thursday at the age of 92, was laid to rest at the Um Al Hiran cemetery on Friday. Born in Jerusalem in 1903, Mr. Hanania assumed senior government posts, including cabinet minister, member of the Upper House of Parliament for several years, vice president of the Reconstruction Council and Jordan's ambassador to Britain. Mr. Hanania is survived by his son and daughters Dr. Daoud Hanania, Mai, Leen, Lula and Meir.

#### Rain, thunderstorms predicted

AMMAN (J.T.) — A cold front is expected to affect the country as of today. The Meteorology Department anticipates rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms in many parts of the Kingdom. The cold front will continue until Sunday evening, according to the Meteorology Department. Temperatures are expected to rise again on Monday until the end of the week. Temperatures for tonight and tomorrow will drop by 6 to 7 degrees Centigrade, lower than the normal average for this season.

#### New telephone information system introduced

AMMAN (Petra) — A new computerised telephone directory was introduced by the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC). Minister of Postal Affairs and Communications Jamal Sarraf, who is also chairman of the Board of Directors of the TCC, inaugurated the service on Thursday at the downtown Amman Telecommunications Building. The service will enable citizens and companies to inquire about subscribers' telephone numbers by dialing 121. TCC officials will be able to answer such inquiries in a short time by using the computerised systems.

### WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Vocalist Colene Erickson and Pianist Sharon Stewart at the Aqaba Golf Hotel, Aqaba, at 7:00 p.m. (the week includes exhibits and papers featuring the USA, video programmes and electronic dialogue).
- ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Ramoud Chantout at the Balqa Art Gallery, Fuheis.
- ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Yousef Badawi at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of art by Ahmad Al Rabih and Mohammad Ali at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
- ★ Exhibition of books dealing with Arab and Islamic subjects at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).
- ★ Exhibition of abstract art by 'Alia' 'Ammoura and oil paintings by Salman 'Abbas at Orbal Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Munira Al Tunisiya at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of art by Rula Shukary at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition by Syrian artist Marwan Qassab Bashi at Darat Al Fann. Also showing a permanent exhibition of contemporary Arab artists.
- ★ Exhibition of women's abstract artists entitled "The World Through the Eyes of Women" at Baladina Art Gallery.

## U.S. business expert recommends internal Jordanian dialogue with all sectors

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In the emerging scenario of economic development in the Middle East in a state of peace and stability, Jordan has to undertake immediate action to bring about fundamental changes in attitude and improve the investment climate in the country, says an experienced American business expert.

Sneh changes should start with the launching of dialogue between the government and representatives of all segments of the society — students, businessmen, bankers, industrialists, investors, professional associations and trade unions etc. — with a view to finding out what exactly every sector wants and envisages, said Jean Abinader, a former president of the U.S. Arab Chamber of Commerce.

"Jordan should not see external aid programmes as an answer to its economic problems and development," Mr. Abinader told the Jordan Times in a recent interview in Amman. The answer lies in bringing about further changes in

the thinking of the government as well as the private sector towards free-market economy.

At the same time, Mr. Abinader, who met with Ministry of Trade officials as well as Jordanian businessmen during his stay here and delivered addresses at the Philadelphia Rotary Club and the Jordan Businessmen's Association (JBA), does not believe that a total "hands-off market" policy by the government would help.

The government has to help the private sector take a leading role through helping bring about open borders and regional trade agreements as well as provide the necessary infrastructure services, he said.

According to Mr. Abinader, who now acts as a business consultant in the U.S., Jordan does not have any edge in the international race for capital although the Kingdom has adopted several measures to improve the investment climate in the country.

He welcomed the draft laws on investments as well as changes to the companies law that are expected to be debated by Parliament as vital to attracting foreign invest-

ments.

Industries that produce import substitutes can help but cannot really be the sole answer to Jordan's quest for industrial development, he said. In any case, if import substitutes are indeed a major area of highly-incentive business in Jordan, he asked, "why is not being done now?"

Mr. Abinader's argument bases itself essentially on an appreciation of the fact that there is local capital available and there are local businessmen who are fully aware of the local potential for import substitutes, but still there is only a limited move towards realising the potential.

Part of the answer to the question, he added, is whether Jordanians could be expected to prefer local products against imported equivalents.

As things stand now, according to Mr. Abinader, "what Jordan offers today (to foreign investors) is only marginally better in some aspects than other countries... in Latin America and Asia/Pacific... offer."

he said. Although Iraq, with 18 million people, offers a broad market potential for industries set up in Jordan, the immediate situation is not very encouraging to investors in view of the international sanctions against Iraq, he asserted.

The two essential components in any move towards change in the business environment in Jordan, he said, are "the political will to effect changes and the private sector's motivation to take risks."

Mr. Abinader said one of the problems facing Jordan was the traditionally leading role the government played in the economic development of the country, letting the private sector trail behind. This state of affairs has led to a natural tendency in the private sector to look to the government to take initiatives.

However, he admitted that there has been change, but said this change had to be developed further into a situation where the role of the government is limited to extending encouragement and incentives to businesses and investors.

Developing change should start at the grass-roots level, he said, citing

several steps that the government should adopt to nurture the process.

These included a broad "piece-by-piece" dialogue among all sectors of the society to find out their perceptions of change. "It is important to know what they want," said Mr. Abinader. "Is it employment? Is it protection of local industries? Is it incentives? Is it facilities?"

It is vital for the government and policymakers to understand how people envisage the process of implementing projects and to inform the people how the government views the same process, he emphasised, pointing out that without such understanding on both sides and common perceptions there is little hope of changes in mindset.

Mr. Abinader also acknowledged that the government was in the process of launching grass-roots level discussions in the run-up to the Amman economic summit scheduled to be held in October as a follow-up to the Casablanca meeting late last year.

The summit could be the best opportunity for Jordan in terms of attracting investments, but the changes that would make the King-

dom attractive to foreign capital should be firmly in place by that time, he emphasised.

Mr. Abinader was in Amman as part of a regional visit that took him to Qatar, Oman, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia on a mission he described as aimed at presenting his viewpoints of "the changes in the global economic scene in view of the World Trade Organisation... changes in the U.S. trade policies and information on economic denominators of world trade."

Mr. Abinader served as president of the U.S. Arab Chamber of Commerce between 1986 and 1993 and now serves as a business consultant in the field of corporate restructuring and new business development.

A bio-data made available to the Jordan Times by the U.S. embassy describes him as consultant to international corporations, U.S. companies and government agencies, and business and non-profit organisations requiring expertise in the fields of cross-border communications and institutional management related to business and economic development.



## In boost to Clinton, Senate approves line-item veto

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The U.S. Senate approved a bill giving the president wider authority to curb congressional spending, as Republican lawmakers struggle to keep their 10-point "Contract With America" on schedule.

The measure, known as the "line-item veto," was passed late Thursday by a vote of 69 to 29 and President Bill Clinton has already made clear he would sign line-item veto legislation into law.

Line-item veto power, long sought by presidents, would allow the chief executive to kill individual spending projects in a bill without scrapping the entire piece of legislation.

"You are going to see a much more fiscally disciplined Congress," said Republican Senator John McCain from Arizona.

The House of Representatives last month approved a slightly different version of the legislation.

The bill was to go before a

House-Senate conference to work out differences and Mr. Clinton was expected to sign whatever version emerges from Congress.

"I hope the House and Senate will now get together quickly to resolve their differences and pass the strongest possible bill," Mr. Clinton said.

"The sooner such a bill reaches my desk the sooner I can take further steps to cut the deficit."

The line-item veto also was a priority listed in the Republicans' political manifesto "Contract With America."

So far, Congress has taken action on only four of the 10 items included in the manifesto within the 100 days the Republicans set aside for action on their contract — Thursday was day 79.

Besides the line-item veto, both houses have passed measures making lawmakers abide by the same employment laws as the private sector and requiring Congress to pay for most of the unfunded

mandates it imposes on states.

The balanced budget constitutional amendment was defeated in the Senate.

An ambitious welfare reform bill, which Republicans are seeking to tone down amid criticism that it would harm children, was set for a House vote Friday.

Other controversial bills on defense and foreign policy, jobs and business, crime, middle class tax breaks and term-limits also face uncertain prospects.

Republicans hailed Thursday's vote as another victory in their crusade to trim government by strengthening outside control, in this case from the president, on the legislature's spending habits.

"This is a culmination of years and years and years of abusing the power of the purse," said Republican Senator Dan Coats who said lawmakers had tried more than 200 times since 1876 to pass such a measure.

"But it was always defe-

ated because Congress was not willing to give up the power of spending," Sen. Coats said.

Under the new bill, a two-thirds majority in both houses is required to override a presidential veto.

The Senate earlier voted down a Democratic proposal to cut that requirement down to a simple majority.

Democratic Senate minority leader Thomas Daschle from South Dakota warned that too much power was being shifted to the executive branch, stating the measure was "an abrogation of power to the president, in my view in a very harmful way."

Some Democrats also criticized a provision in the bill by which each spending item is broken down into hundreds of bills, each subject to presidential veto.

"I would rather have a president working on correcting abuses in government rather than signing 10,000 or 12,000 bills a year," Georgia Senator Sam Nunn said.



Witness Brian "Kato" Kaelin (left) reviews transcripts with defense attorney Robert Shapiro during the O.J. Simpson murder trial in Los Angeles (AFP photo)

## Prosecutor attacks key witness' credibility at O.J. Simpson trial

LOS ANGELES (AP) — In an aggressive attack on her own key witness' credibility, a prosecutor suggested that Brian "Kato" Kaelin is covering up for O.J. Simpson by hiding details of angry battles between the former football star and his ex-wife.

"There's nothing I tried to hide from you," the rattled witness said Thursday to Deputy District Attorney Marcia Clark, trying to explain why he never told a grand jury last June that one of the fights led to a 911 call for police help.

"I knew if it was a 911 call there would be a report," Mr. Kaelin testified. "I was in front of all these people..."

"So are you telling us now that you felt intimidated by the grand jury, Mr. Kaelin?" Ms. Clark snapped.

"I don't know if intimidated is the word, but I tried to remember everything that I could," Mr. Kaelin replied.

"Do you remember telling me, Mr. Kaelin, that you had thought that being in front of a grand jury would be intimidating, but it turned out to be just a bunch of old guys in fishing caps?" Ms. Clark asked, drawing snickers in the courtroom.

"Yes," replied the witness. The court day ended with

the witness under siege and ordered to return Monday. No testimony was scheduled Friday.

Mr. Kaelin has been a reluctant witness for prosecutors, who have tried to use his testimony to show jurors Simpson had time to kill his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman late the evening of June 12, 1994.

Simpson, who has pleaded innocent to the murders, faces life in prison if convicted.

In sharp contrast to Ms. Clark's tone, defense attorney Robert Shapiro at one point asked Mr. Kaelin, "I take it this has been a very difficult time for you? ... A very emotional time for you because one of your dear friends had been murdered, is that true?"

"Yes," Mr. Kaelin said, his lips trembling and his eyes appearing to tear. "I have been honest in everything I remember, and I answered that way."

Ms. Clark's monitory annoyance with the witness reached a crescendo in re-direct questioning. She implied that he cooperated with the defense from the start and withheld information from the prosecution.

"Yes," replied the witness. The court day ended with

An aspiring actor with an amusingly goofy personality, Mr. Kaelin moved into Ms. Simpson's guest house after meeting her in Aspen, Colorado in 1992. He helped out with the Simpsons' two young children and sometimes paid Ms. Simpson a modest rent, he said.

But when she bought a condominium with no guest house, Mr. Kaelin testified, Simpson suggested it was "not right" for Mr. Kaelin to live there even though a guest bedroom on a separate level was available. He offered Mr. Kaelin free guest quarters at his Rockingham Avenue estate and Mr. Kaelin accepted, moving over in January 1994.

"She was upset," Mr. Kaelin said of Ms. Simpson. "Did she feel you had betrayed her?" Ms. Clark asked. "She felt I was manipulated. Those were her words," Mr. Kaelin said.

On cross-examination, Mr. Shapiro stressed Simpson's generosity to Mr. Kaelin and others, noting he made no demands of his house guest. He portrayed him as a regular guy who usually toted his own luggage, hung up his own clothes and didn't have servants catering to his every whim.

## Governor urges Argentina to drop Falklands claim

PORT STANLEY, Falkland Islands (R) — Governor of the Falkland Islands David Tatham said Friday the islands would never improve relations with Argentina until Buenos Aires dropped its claim to the southern archipelago.

Speaking at the state residence stormed by invading Argentine troops in 1982, he said: "The islands find it difficult to have a rapprochement with a country that says we will take you over by the year 2000."

He dismissed moves by Argentina to win over the British islanders with reported offers of cash to surrender their sovereignty and free holidays in Argentina.

"I think it is both insulting and in vain, and also a sad reflection on the morals of Argentine politics, the belief that everyone has their price," he told Reuters in an interview.

"They are definitely playing a hearts and minds campaign but they do not understand the Falklands character."

About 1,000 troops, mostly Argentine, died after Britain launched a task force to regain the islands seized by Argentina.

Britain and Argentina resumed diplomatic relations in 1990 and have been rebuilding trade ties, but the Falkland Islanders still remain deeply suspicious of Argentine motives.

President Carlos Menem has pledged Argentina will regain the islands it claims, and calls the Malvinas, by peaceful means by the year 2000. That claim is enshrined in the Argentine constitution.

"Relations with Argentina are bound to be distant as long as the Argentine claim to the islands is there. Until they drop it, it is difficult for us to treat them as neighbours," Mr. Tatham said.

Seismic surveys show the windswept Falklands, home to around 2,000 people, could enjoy a North Sea-style oil bonanza. The islands' local government, due soon to launch a licensing round, believes exploration could start by the end of next year.

London and Buenos Aires have had talks about joint oil exploration but the British government has made it plain that the way oil exploration develops is up to the islanders.

Mr. Tatham said it "seemed to be impossible" to find a formula for oil development that would gain Argentine consent.

He conceded that multinational oil prospectors would prefer an end to political uncertainty but said: "If we don't get Argentine acquiescence, we will still go ahead... these areas (that could yield oil) are quite close to the Falklands. Developers won't need to have bases on the Argentine mainland."

## Peru police catch 30 Maoist rebels in sweep

LIMA (R) — Police have arrested the deputy leader and more than 30 members of a breakaway faction of the Maoist guerrilla movement Shining Path in a nationwide sweep, authorities said.

"We're talking about a very important capture," President Alberto Fujimori told reporters Thursday.

Mr. Fujimori said 20 guerrillas were detained, including four members of the group's 10-member Emergency Central Committee.

Police officials said more than 30 guerrillas were caught in the sweep Tuesday and Wednesday, including several regional and national leaders.

They said Margie Clavo Peralta, political chief of a Shining Path faction, was arrested Wednesday with two other rebels in a rented house

in the central Andean city. The faction is led by Oscar Ramirez Dandari, who opposes a peace accord with the Peruvian government.

Police said the hardcore guerrilla faction was planning an "armed strike" to try to upset the South American country's April 9 general elections.

Authorities said Maoist rebels took advantage of the withdrawal of Peruvian troops engaged in last month's border conflict with Ecuador to step up attacks in the coca-growing Upper Huallaga Valley. As many as 50 people may have died in the renewed violence.

But attacks have subsided since the troops returned from the Ecuadorian border and the arrests Tuesday and Wednesday are the latest blows to the weakened Maoist group.

## Canadian, U.S. stargazers find two new galaxies

TORONTO (R) — A team of Canadian and U.S. astronomers said Thursday that it has discovered two new galaxies previously hidden by thick clouds of space dust.

The galaxies — independent systems of stars, planets, gas, and dust — were initially detected in October 1992 by a U.S. observatory, but confirmed only recently.

The discovery brings to 72 the number of known star clusters near Earth's galaxy, the Milky Way, Canadian astronomer Marshall McCall said in an interview.

"What's different about this is that both of these galaxies were in our own backyard and had gone unnoticed," said Mr. McCall, an associate professor of physics and astronomy at Toronto's York University.

"For all we know there could be a professor with a telescope on another planet pointing a telescope at us right now," he said.

Mr. McCall and University of Alabama scientist Ronald Buta were studying another galaxy, Maffei 1, from Arizona's Kitt Peak National

Observatory when they spotted the infra-red light of the two newest heavenly discoveries.

Mr. McCall said the Milky Way's thick dust clouded normal light from the two star clusters, now known as Object 1 and Object 2, located about 10 million light years from Earth.

"The dust acts like a fog and obscures your view in those particular directions where it is most concentrated," he said.

Object 1 is the larger of the two with an estimated one billion stars, while Object 2 contains roughly 100 million stars, Mr. McCall said.

By comparison, the Milky Way holds about 100 billion stars.

Mr. McCall said only two weeks ago by German scientist Walter Huchtmeier at the Max Planck Institute.

Chaim Rosemarin, assistant editor of the U.S. Astronomical Journal, said McCall and Buta's research is scheduled to be published in the journal's June issue.

## India's Congress dissidents speak out

NEW DELHI (R) — Dissidents in India's ruling Congress Party and supporters of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao are talking louder and cracks in party unity appear to be widening into chasms.

Former Finance and Foreign Minister Narain Dutt Tiwari, the latest Congress leader to break ranks, made a thinly veiled call for Mr. Rao to step down at a rally in the northwestern state of Punjab Thursday.

Mr. Tiwari, who quit the ruling party's top executive body earlier in the week, likened the Congress leadership to a car driver mindless of the traffic and heading blindly towards a crash.

"If you do not want to resign it is okay with us, even though some people have been demanding it," Mr. Tiwari was quoted by the Pioneer newspaper as telling the rally. "We just say, do something to retrieve the credibility of all those people who have come to express their solidarity with us."

Mr. Tiwari was the keynote speaker at the rally

in Bhatinda to honour activists killed in the struggle for Indian independence.

The event attracted many of the growing band of Congress Party dissidents, including their self-appointed leader, Arjun Singh.

Mr. Singh, a former cabinet minister and party number two, was expelled from Congress last month after declaring open war on Mr. Rao, accusing him of ignoring minorities and being soft on party corruption.

Mr. Singh underlined the recent Congress Party defeats in elections in the major industrial states of Maharashtra and Gujarat, telling the rally he was ashamed that right-wing Hindu nationalists had taken power.

"Who is responsible for it," he asked. "If it is us then do punish us, otherwise punish those who are responsible."

Mr. Tiwari's growing proximity to Mr. Singh is increasing the pressure on Mr. Rao as he tries to pull the party together in the run-up to general elections that have to be called before the middle

of next year.

The extent of the growing rift within Congress is likely to come into the open at a meeting of the party's plenary, the All India Congress Committee, which Mr. Rao is planning to call for next month.

Mr. Tiwari has so far rejected overtures from Rao loyalists to withdraw his resignation from the Congress Working Committee, the top decision-making body, saying Mr. Singh must be accepted back into the party fold if he is to back down.

Party officials have warned Mr. Tiwari against linking his resignation to the revocation of Mr. Singh's expulsion, and there are growing signs Mr. Rao may be preparing to get tough with Mr. Tiwari.

Kamaluddin Ahmad, a Rao man, told a congress news briefing on Thursday that the party would likely take disciplinary action against members who attended a rally planned by dissidents next month.

Organisers have said both Mr. Singh and Mr. Tiwari will address the meeting.

## Officer in CIA pay accused of Guatemala killings

WASHINGTON (R) — A Guatemalan intelligence officer in the pay of the CIA ordered the killings of a U.S. citizen and a guerrilla leader married to an American, a member of Congress alleged Thursday.

New Jersey Democrat Robert Torricelli, a member of the House of Representatives Intelligence Committee, said the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) knew about the Guatemala killings in 1990 and 1992 but concealed its knowledge for years.

Responding to Mr. Torricelli's charges, the CIA said it had only received "credible information" about the two deaths long after they occurred and shared it with U.S. authorities.

"When there is an investigation about the death of an American citizen, withholding information about those responsible and circumstances about that murder... is a crime," Mr. Torricelli said, adding he was calling for an inquiry.

He said the United States could protect its interests in Guatemala "without having contractual relationships with hired killers who are involved in a brutal civil war."

Mr. Torricelli spoke at a news conference with Jennifer Harbury, a Harvard Law School graduate and widow of guerrilla leader Efraim Bamaca Velasquez who Mr. Torricelli said was tortured and executed after being captured in 1992.

Mr. Harbury, who has gone on hunger strikes to publicise her demands to know her husband's fate, said: "This is the first time I have been told the truth in two years."

Mr. Torricelli said he told Mr. Harbury Wednesday that there was reason to believe

her husband had died by order of Colonel Julio Roberto Alpirez, a Guatemalan intelligence officer. He said the officer was also responsible for directing the 1990 murder of American citizen Michael Devine.

In a letter to President Bill Clinton, Mr. Torricelli said Col. Roberto Alpirez was under contract with the CIA and remained on its payroll at the time of the killings.

At the White House, spokesman Mike McCurry was asked if he could deny that Mr. Bamaca's killer was on the U.S. government payroll. He replied: "Of course I can't. I don't know the answer to... who killed him or how he was killed."

He said the United States was pressing the Guatemalan government to re-interrogate several Guatemalan military officers, including Col. Alpirez.

Mr. Torricelli's letter to Mr. Clinton said: "The direct involvement of the CIA in the murder of these individuals leads me to the extraordinary conclusion that the agency is simply out of control and that it contains what can only be called a criminal element."

Mr. McCurry called that an exaggerated charge, saying, "what we've done is try to get to the truth."

In a statement, acting CIA Director William Studeman said the charge the agency had information about the two deaths at the time they occurred was "false and utterly irresponsible."

"The U.S. intelligence community well after they occurred," he said. "The agency shared all of this information with the appropriate U.S. government authorities."

## French connect at the Oscars, but industry sags at home

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The 67th annual Academy Awards Monday features six films with a French connection, but that host of entries cannot hide the talent flight France is currently undergoing in its film industry.

Red French language film which is the third part of Krzysztof Kieslowski's trilogy — joining White and Blue — is in the running this year for three Oscars.

Kieslowski has been nominated for best director, and the film earned nominations for best cinematography and best original screenplay.

Three other French co-productions include Farinelli; Il Castato, by Gerard Corbiau, Before the Rain, by Mileho Maneheviski, and Burnt By The Sun by Nikita Mikhalkov. The films originate from Belgium, Macedonia, and Russia respectively.

Queen Margot, by Patrice Chereau, is competing for the best costume design award and The Monk And The Fish by Michael Dujok-De Vit has been selected among the best animated short films.

"French film will be well represented this year," said

Paul Zargist, a Los Angeles-based critic.

But the strong French showing in this year's competition masks a frustration at home with the staid, predictable attitude French films have taken in the last few years.

No less a personage than France's hottest actress, Sophie Marceau, railed against the languor plaguing the French film scene.

"The figures tell the story," the 28-year-old Marceau said in a recent interview with the Washington Post.

"People in France and elsewhere in Europe are going more often to the cinema but much less often to French films," she said.

"They like what the Americans have to offer. American films tell us something about the society we live in. French films don't like to tell cruel truths," she added.

Marceau lamented the fact that the French products tend to "follow a basic formula."

"Husband sleeps with Jeanne because Bernadette cuckolded him by sleeping with Christophe and in the

end they all go off to a restaurant. How many times can you act in that kind of film?" she said.

Marceau has turned to Hollywood and she turned out Brave Heart with Mel Gibson. The film is due out this May in the United States.

Others before her have fled the Left Bank for the West Coast. Christophe Lambert and Julie Deply have headed to Malibu the chic beach-front domain of the rich and famous outside Los Angeles.

Maria de Medeiros made a hit with U.S. audiences when she played the seemingly innocent partner of Bruce Willis in Pulp Fiction.

Beatrice Dalle is slated to play in a new film by Jim Jarmusch and Yvan Attal has cut a deal to star in Clint Eastwood's next project.

On top of that, Juliette Binoche, who turned down a role in the box office smash Jurassic Park, is said to be foraging around the United States for other opportunities.

"French actors are voting with their feet," the Post said.



A worker ties down the head of a giant gold Oscar statue in front of the Shrine Auditorium where the 67th Annual Academy Awards will take place Monday night (AFP photo)

## Sacked director of Bolshoi reappointed

MOSCOW (R) — The Russian government Friday reappointed Vladimir Kokonin as general director of the world-famous Bolshoi Theatre just a week after he had been sacked by President Boris Yeltsin. ITAR-TASS news agency said. The move is likely to spark further furor at the theatre, rocked by protracted infighting between Kokonin and other leading officials over control of the Bolshoi, which has long set standards of excellence in ballet and opera. Kokonin was sacked after some of the theatre's performers mounted an unprecedented strike in protest at the resignation of artistic director Yuri Grigorovich, who had been engaged in a lengthy dispute with Kokonin. The government decision Friday to reappoint Kokonin also signals a split with Yeltsin, who last Friday decreed that the post of general director had been abolished. Former Bolshoi principal ballet dancer Vladimir Vasilyev will take over from Grigorovich, who resigned on March 7 after 30 years in the job. The dispute, and a row over new short-term contracts to replace a system where jobs could often be held for life, has split the company. On March 10 dancers staged their first strike since the theatre was founded in 1776 and 14 of them are due to go to court Friday to face charges of staging an illegal strike. These dancers have been suspended but TASS said 10 of them had resumed rehearsals to stay in shape.

## Diana meets photographer Avedon

LONDON (AP) — Richard Avedon met Princess Diana Tuesday, but was the only photographer present who didn't snap her picture. Avedon instead guided Princess Diana around his exhibition "evidence 1944-1994," a retrospective of his portraiture that opened to the public at London's National Portrait Gallery. Princess Diana, who formally separated from Prince Charles in December 1992 after 11 years of marriage, wore a dark-green velvet wraparound dress and sported a bandaged right knee from a work-related injury. Asked if he would like to shoot Princess Diana's portrait someday, the 71-year-old Avedon said, "it would be a great pleasure and an honour. ... There's no one more beautiful."

## McCartney rocks the Brodsky Quartet

LONDON (AP) — Paul McCartney rock 'n' rolled with a little help from his friends — the Brodsky Quartet. The ex-Beatle capped an evening of performances of his "classical" pieces with a surprise performance of the 1968 Beatles hit, Lady Madonna, backed by the famed string quartet better known for its classical repertoire. The black tie benefit, an evening with Paul McCartney and friends, was expected to raise \$75,000 (\$120,000) for the Royal College of Music. The concert at St. James, Prince Palace, Prince Charles' residence, debuted McCartney's The Leaf, a 10-minute solo composition performed by pianist Anya Alexeyev, 22, a recent student at the college. It also featured excerpts from his Liverpool Oratorio, composed in 1991. McCartney was scheduled to close performing the classic Beatles ballad, Yesterday — but the surprised audience with the fast-paced Lady Madonna. Afterwards, McCartney himself was surprised when the prince, who is also the president of the college, awarded him a fellowship of the college.

## Indonesian town to host 'standing on one foot' contest

JAKARTA (AFP) — A multinational group of competitors will at the weekend attempt to outstand each other — on one leg — in the Central Java town of Semarang, the Antara News Agency said Friday. Antara quoted the head of the Indonesian Museum of Records, Jaya Snprana, as saying that participants from Australia, Belgium, Germany, Japan, India and the Netherlands have registered for the one-day event Saturday. The competition, organised by the museum together with the local chapter of the Rotary Club has a first prize of one million rupiah (\$450).



## Battlefield, diplomatic fronts heat up in Bosnia

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) — As Bosnian government troops pressed an offensive against rebel Serbs, diplomatic efforts at resolving the conflict appeared to gain momentum.

In Sarajevo, the humanitarian airlift, suspended nearly two weeks ago after planes were shot at, resumed Friday.

Government troops had gained two to three kilometres on one of three battle fronts in the Majevica Mountains, said U.N. spokesman Lt. Col. Gary Coward.

U.N. officials reported heavy fighting around a Serb telecommunications tower which has as a key radio link between Serb territory in eastern and northwestern Bosnia.

The Bosnian Serb News Agency (SRNA) said the tower was well defended and claimed Serbs had repelled a government attack.

The commander of govern-

ment forces, Gen. Rasim Delic, told state TV that the "limited combat activities" aimed at pushing Serb artillery out of range of Tuzla, the second largest government-held town after Sarajevo.

"Intense fighting and shelling is continuing to the east and northeast of Tuzla," said Alexander Ivanko, a U.N. spokesman. It's "full combat, and not just a ceasefire violation."

The fighting has seriously undermined an already strained truce, which both sides say they will abandon once it expires May 1.

Both sides have refused to resume any political negotiations on a possible peace, each setting conditions the other side rejects.

But the government acknowledged Thursday that it had made contact with Serbia's powerful president, Slobodan Milosevic, to probe his stand on a possible peace scenario.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said Thurs-

day that he proposed new ideas for a Bosnian peace plan to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at talks in Geneva.

The Bosnian government news agency BH Press reported that an envoy of Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic met Mr. Milosevic Tuesday to learn first hand, without mediation, Mr. Milosevic's intentions toward Bosnia.

It was the first known direct contact between the Bosnian government and Mr. Milosevic without mediation.

The envoy, Bosnian ambassador to Switzerland Muhammad Filipovic, informed Mr. Milosevic that Bosnia's territorial integrity must be ensured under any peace plan, BH Press said.

The Bosnian government wants recognition from Serbia as a condition for formal negotiations. Mr. Milosevic first wants sanctions lifted. If Mr. Milosevic recognised Bosnia, it would undermine hopes of rebel Serbs to unite

## Chechens vow last stand in Shali

### Russian general sees more months of fighting

SHALI, Russia (AP) — Chechen separatist commanders admitted Friday that they had lost the battle for Argun, but said they would make a last stand here against superior Russian forces before going to the hills.

Argun fell to the Russian forces Thursday after three months of fighting that destroyed most of the town, said an officer from the Chechen high command, who asked not to be named.

"They pulled out, it was decided to cut their losses and save lives," the officer said. "There are still a few Sanyerniki (suicide fighters) in the town," he said.

Argun had come to symbolize the David and Goliath resistance of Chechen guerrillas armed almost exclusively with small arms against the Russians' tanks, artillery and airpower.

But on Wednesday, Russian tanks completed an encirclement of the town and further resistance was clearly suicidal. Between 100 and 200 fighters evacuated, the officer said.

Shali, 15 kilometres (nine miles) to the south of Argun, has become the new focal point of resistance — and perhaps the last before a retreat in the Caucasus Mountains.

It has also been the separatists' self-declared capital since the massive Russian force won control of Grozny in mid-February after two months of air raids and artillery shelling that left much of the city deserted and in ruins.

The headquarters was abandoned late Wednesday after intensive rocket attacks on the centre, but commanders and fighters were again based in the deserted town Friday.

"Shali is now the battle. There's a lot more strength here than they think. We're waiting for them," said Rashid Bargishov, deputy commander on the republic's southern front.

"We'll do what we can," he said. "But Russian forces were also tightening the noose around Shali and the flat fields are perfect territory for tanks, supported by low-flying helicopter gunships."

"After Argun, they think that if they take Shali they've won the war, that they fully control the republic," Mr. Bargishov said. "But after Shali, it's the mountains."

"Up there we'll reign," he said. Russian tactics are simple and were proven in Grozny — destroy a town with incessant artillery and air shelling until nothing remains but a heap of ruins, an empty carcass which the Chechens then decide to abandon.

The winding, narrow roads and thick woods in the mountains would make any movement of armoured cars and tanks almost impossible. However, many Chechens fear that resistance in the mountains would lead to bloody air raids on refugee-packed villages.

The centre of Shali was shattered and almost deserted. Almost every building was either in ruins or pockmarked with shrapnel. There was no electricity, gas or water.

The town was quiet early Friday, but cars drove fast and those on foot hugged the walls to avoid being caught in an open space if shells or rockets suddenly crashed in.

The only civilians left were those with nowhere to escape. A couple of women sold cigarettes at fold-up tables set up next to a brick apartment building blown apart by shelling.

Tens of thousands of Russian soldiers, backed by tanks, jet planes and helicopters rolled into Chechenya on Dec. 11 to crush President Dzhikhar Dudaev's three-year-old declaration of independence from the Russian Federation.

The Chechens have lost the war for control of their towns and are now set for a protracted guerrilla campaign from the mountains.

The Chechens admitted Thursday they had abandoned Shali, their de facto capital after Grozny fell last month, in the face of round-the-clock rocket attacks, and Moscow claimed that Argun too had fallen.

Chechen separatist fighters realised weeks ago that, faced with overwhelming Russian firepower, they would lose the towns one by one just as they lost Grozny.

Now they are preparing for the final phase of the war, the battle for the mountains. Although Russians have

seized or are about to seize the last four towns — Argun, Shali and Gudermes in the east, Achkhoy-Martan in the west — and most of the villages still held by separatists, they will be masters of a devastated country.

Argun is now a ghost town where there is no single building in the centre which has not been or destroyed by shelling.

It seems the Russians, after the failure of their first assault on Grozny at New Year, want to avoid any hand-to-hand fighting with Chechen fighters. After encircling Argun Wednesday, they simply intensified their shelling of the town to force the Chechens to give it up rather than trying to take it by force.

"It's terrible, we have never used such firepower before. We're bombing them ceaselessly," a helicopter pilot, just returned from a mission over Argun, told AFP Wednesday.

The Russian advance has stamped thousands of civilians into fleeing their homes, many from Grozny and villages taken under heavy Russian shelling.

Horrorified by gruesome accounts of reprisals by Russian troops in Grozny, they have no option but to follow Chechen fighters in the inevitable retreat to the mountains.

Small villages dotted across the Caucasus Mountains and packed with refugees have suffered already from Russian jets and helicopters. Surrounding roads take lorryloads of Chechen fighters and weapons to mountain bases from where they are preparing to carry on the fight.

But the Chechens can scarcely hope to use these mountains, already under shelling and with barely drivable roads, as anything more than a base for a guerrilla war.

They have no hope of recapturing the country, only preventing the Russians settle in peacefully and making difficult, if not impossible, any return to normal life.

The commander of Russian troops in Chechenya has warned against expecting a quick end to the war and believes instead that the military push against the breakaway republic will continue a few more months at least.

"It won't end so quickly, unfortunately," Colonel General Anatoly Kulikov said.

"The war has its own laws and stages, and we calculate that by the summer period (June 21-Sept. 21), we can establish control of two-thirds of the territory," he said.

This, he added, would allow Russia to "move from military to political means and... to hold elections and establish a new, legitimate power."

Gen. Kulikov said the current Russian push focused on two Chechen cities, Argun, 11 kilometres (seven miles) east of Grozny, and Shali, 21 kilometres (13 miles) south-east.

He said the Chechen forces initially consisted of 15,000 "well-prepared, well-trained and excellently armed men," and another 30,000 "semi-trained" local militia.

"They are considerably fewer now."

## Japan cult denies sarin attack, abduction charges

TOKYO (R) — The Japanese religious sect targeted by police in three days of raids launched a media campaign Friday denying allegations of abductions and of nerve-gas production.

The elusive leader of the Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth Sect) denied chemicals seized in his sect's buildings were related to Tokyo nerve-gas attacks, while in a separate interview the cult's spokesman claimed Japanese-based U.S. military forces were responsible.

Sect founder Shoko Asahara said in a taped message shown on television Friday that chemicals found at his sect's buildings had no connection to the nerve gas used in Monday's lethal attack on Tokyo subways.

"This is all a bashing campaign against our sect," said the bearded, long-haired Asahara, who was dressed in a purple smock with his long hair and beard looking dishevelled.

In a videotape sent to NBK public television in response to an interview request, Mr. Asahara claimed the chemical stocks were for peaceful purposes.

"Sodium fluoride is used to

make pottery," Mr. Asahara said in a calm tone. "Phosphorus trichloride is used to make plastic materials and also as a herbicide. I cannot see how one can make sarin out of these substances."

Chemical experts were sceptical, and noted that sodium fluoride and phosphorus trichloride were ingredients of sarin.

"I have never heard of sodium fluoride being used for pottery," said a professor of pottery at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts who did not want to be identified.

Police said they were keen to question Mr. Asahara about his group's motives in holding the chemicals, which have been identified as key ingredients of the type of nerve gas used in the Tokyo subway attack that killed 10 and made thousands ill.

The secretive guru's whereabouts were still not known as the police operation against the cult, which has turned up large chemical stockpiles, entered a third day.

Yoshinobu Aoyama, Aum's lawyer and a sect member, accused the United States of masterminding the subway attack.

"This is just speculation, but I think it's the U.S. military or some organisation like that," Mr. Aoyama said in a live interview on Japanese television.

A U.S. embassy spokesman said: "The United States categorically rejects the charges, which are not worth comment."

Mr. Aoyama also denied the cult was involved in the abductions of 21-year-old Satoshi Minami and the Feb. 28 abduction of Kiyoshi Kariya.

On Sunday, three cult members were detained in connection with the alleged kidnapping of Minami.

Kariya, head of a notary office in Tokyo, was abducted as his younger sister was trying to break with the sect.

In what has amounted to a military-style operation involving thousands of officers and chemical experts wearing gas masks, police have turned up tonnes of chemicals inside the sect's warehouses at Kamiku, Issiki village, west of Tokyo.

Although police have not formally linked the raids with Monday's subway attack, the sight of officers in chemical warfare gear and gas masks

has left Japan in no doubt that they are looking for evidence in the nerve-gas case. The quantity of the confiscated chemicals is staggering. Police sources said 34 truckloads of chemicals, both liquids and powders, have been taken from the sect's sprawling complex 100 kilometres west of Tokyo.

Experts who saw television footage of the buildings said the complex resembled a chemical plant complete with ventilation ducts, laboratories and warehouses.

"This is almost like a chemical factory," said Hidenori Watanabe, chemistry professor at Tokyo University.

In Osaka, hundreds of officers and riot police equipped with gas masks raided the group's offices. The official reason given by a police spokesman was to search for evidence related to the kidnapping of a university student.

He said there were no formal arrests Friday. But reporters at the scene said police detained five sect followers for trying to obstruct the raid at the offices in an Osaka business district.

Police sources said there would be more raids over the weekend.

## U.S.-Russia 'honeymoon' over, Kozyrev says

GENEVA (AP) — The U.S.-Russia "honeymoon" has come to an end, Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev declared after an increasingly rancorous talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher over Chechenya and Russia's nuclear sales to Iran.

In a more encouraging vein, Mr. Kozyrev said the two countries have a growing ability to resolve problems. The honeymoon ended "not in divorce," he told a news conference.

Mr. Christopher, too, portrayed the recently strained relationship as one in which U.S. and Russian leaders are determined to address differences "jointly and candidly."

But as the two men opened planning for a May meeting in Moscow between President Bill Clinton and Russia's president, Boris Yeltsin, it was clear they had failed to move closer to resolving differences over Iran, Chechenya and NATO.

They announced formation of a working group to study nuclear proliferation issues, apparently seeking a way to deal with U.S. opposition to Russia's plan to sell a nuclear

power plant to Iran. The group is to complete its review in time for the May 10 Clinton-Yeltsin summit.

"I let the foreign minister know of our strong opposition to Russian nuclear cooperation with Iran," Mr. Christopher said. "I did furnish him some information we have about Iranian nuclear intentions."

But Mr. Kozyrev gave no indication Russia is backing off its insistence that the Iranian programme is peaceful and not geared to developing nuclear weapons.

"Our cooperation with Iran is fully in the purview of the non-proliferation treaty," he said, speaking through an interpreter.

On Chechenya, where a new Russian military offensive is under way to quash a rebellion, Mr. Christopher said, "I'm very concerned about the escalation we've seen there in recent days. I underscored to him our belief that the fighting must end, that humanitarian relief must be able to get to the war's victims, and that a political settlement must be negotiated."

Mr. Kozyrev said merely, "there are a number of differences and nuances in our estimates of situations like, for instance, Iran, or let us say the evaluation of the situation in Chechenya."

"But what counts more is that once again we showed our ability to discuss all those matters not in a confrontational way."

Mr. Christopher repeated his assertion of the previous day that Russia is "paying a very high price in world opinion for this adventure, and I hope it ends as soon as possible."

On Wednesday, Mr. Christopher suggested that Chechenya could undermine Russia's goal of becoming a full member of the economic grouping of the world's seven leading industrial democracies.

The G-7's annual summit is in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in June, and Mr. Christopher said Russia's participation would be no different than it has been in previous years: Yeltsin will attend but not as a member of the exclusive group.

Mr. Kozyrev said it would be "nonsensical" for G-7 to discuss world debt without Russia.

Both men said no sweeping new ideas were exchanged on how to resolve the long Bosnian conflict.

Meanwhile, President Yeltsin's Security Council confirmed plans Thursday to hold a military parade marking the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II on May 9, when western leaders are in town.

President Clinton agreed to visit only after Mr. Yeltsin assured him there would be no displays of weaponry on Red Square, where he will attend a parade of war veterans.

But the council acknowledged that plans are proceeding for a big parade just a few kilometres away on Poklonnaya Hill in western Moscow, where a huge war memorial complex is in the final stages of construction.

The council did not make public specifics about the celebration. But the newspaper Izvestia said last week the parade would feature 10,000 troops, 250 armoured vehicles and 70 aircraft.

The closed-door meeting in the Kremlin included Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and other top officials.

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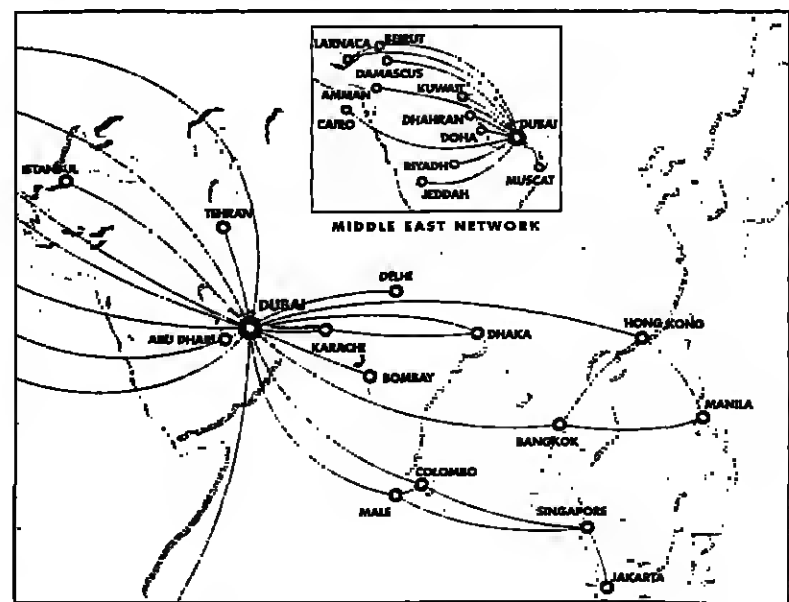
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THE FINEST IN THE SKY.

## 7 EU 'Schengen' states to drop border controls

BRUSSELS (R) — Seven of the 15 European Union countries drop internal border controls with each other Sunday when the so-called Schengen Accord comes into effect.

The agreement was named after the Luxembourg town in which it was originally signed in 1985 by five countries — Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France and Germany. Spain and Portugal signed up in 1992.

From Sunday passengers flying between those countries will leave from domestic rather than international airport terminals and will not be subject to identity checks.

"Schengen is a decisive step in the path towards freedom of movement in the whole of Europe," Bernd Ichnidauer, minister of state in the German Chancellery, told a news conference.

The system, which involves strengthened external border controls and a centralised in-

formation system to track criminals, is bound to produce some hiccups at the start.

"There will be some weak spots at the beginning, but everything will be ironed out," Mr. Schimmbauer said.

Airports have rushed to construct special terminals to accommodate three different kinds of passenger, and not all have made it on time.

"Arrival and departure systems for passengers in our airports will be deeply changed from March 26," Belgium's External Trade Ministry said in a statement.

The accord could also make life more difficult for other members of the 15-nation European Union (EU) who could face tougher passport controls in the early days than they have been used to.

The Nordic countries — which have a passport union, also want to join the accord — but their situation is complicated by Norway which de-

clined EU membership last year.

"Norway cannot become a member of Schengen because it is not a member of the EU," French European Affairs Minister Alain Lamassoure told a news conference this week.

Italy and Greece have signed up to the pact, but cannot join it until they have adapted to the information system and Austria has for the moment just observer status.

But Mr. Lamassoure said that soon all continental EU members would be aboard.

That would put pressure on Ireland and Britain.

Ireland has said it would like to join but cannot because Britain is refusing to take part and would automatically throw up border controls between Northern Ireland, a British province, and the republic and across the Irish Sea.

About 80 per cent of peo-

ple travelling to and from Ireland do so in the North or to Britain.

"I think that once our British friends see that a traveller between Heathrow and Roissy faces the same controls as someone arriving from Washington... they will see the sense of joining Schengen," Mr. Lamassoure said.

In the run-up to Schengen Day members played down fears of increased crime and illegal immigration when border controls come down. That is Britain's argument against joining.

The Schengen group's central computer — the Schengen Information System, based in the French town of Strasbourg, contains 10 million files and a million names of people considered undesirable.

Police will be able to use the system to track stolen cars, crime suspects, illegal arms and forged money.



## Jordan Times

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## No peace without Jerusalem

FOR THE umpteenth time, U.S. senators have proposed the transfer of the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Ninety-three of them suggested to the White House last week that the embassy be moved to occupied Jerusalem by 1999. The period from now until then was ostensibly meant to give the peace negotiators the opportunity to decide on the final status of the holy city.

In so acting, the U.S. Senate is actually sending two conflicting messages: One, that nothing should be done to jeopardise the negotiations on the fate of the city. The other is that no matter what the outcome of the negotiations is, the U.S. embassy should be moved to Jerusalem. In effect the Senators in question are endorsing Israel's proposition that Jerusalem is its eternal capital.

This recent initiative comes also on the heel of many similar policy statements from the U.S. Congress that seem to have no end to them. In retrospect, such interferences smack of a denial of the fact that there are in essence two Jerusalems: one Israeli and one Arab. The twin cities live side by side and are interlinked by common heritage but divided by political, religious and cultural differences. The sooner there is a wider acceptance of this reality the sooner it would be possible to articulate a coherent policy posture on the city. There are more than 150,000 Palestinians living in East Jerusalem. This number is projected to increase rather than decrease in the future. Surely, those people should be able to identify themselves with their own country and capital as well. Only the blind cannot see that East Jerusalem is distinguishable from West Jerusalem. When there is full and wide recognition of this fact, the resolution of the conflict over the city shall become within the reach of all the parties.

The U.S. Senate should not go against international legitimacy and U.N. resolutions, not to mention the facts of history and the present, which state unequivocally that Jerusalem is an occupied Arab city, to appease the powerful Zionist lobby.

Nor should the U.S. senators underestimate the Arab determination to end the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. There will be no peace in the Middle East unless Jerusalem is freed from the yoke of Zionist colonisation that the U.S. Senators should not ignore if they want to see an end to the conflicts in the area.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I ARABIC daily on Friday dealt in its editorial with the Arab League's 50th anniversary meeting, saying the league's jubilee session ended in mixed emotions of sadness and hope. It said the meeting ended with feelings of sadness over the Arab status quo, mingled with feelings of hope that inter-Arab relations will improve in the near future. The paper said that the issue of making the Middle East a region free of all mass destruction weapons and Israel's refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) dominated the Arab foreign ministers' discussions at the session, expressing regret that these ministers did not reach agreement on unifying Arab stands before the United Nations meeting in April on the issue. The newspaper also voiced regret that no agreement was reached on other Arab issues, such as the establishment of an Arab court of justice and the lifting of the siege on Iraq, Libya, Sudan and the Palestinians. What gives some hope, said the paper, is that the league's council agreed to address the U.N. Security Council demanding unifying standards on nuclear weapons in accordance with chapter seven of its charter and taking the necessary measures to ensure that Israel adheres to these standards.

DEALING WITH the same subject, Al Dostour daily expressed regret that the council's meeting ended with a new split in Arab ranks and stands, noting that the Arabs were now in dire need for unifying their stands at this critical stage in their history. It said although the concluding statement by the council tried to conceal this horrible split, statements by several Arab foreign ministers participating in the meeting showed that the Arab countries did not take a unified stand on the signing of the NPT. It is the first time that the Arab League Council witnesses such a split in the general Arab stand on an issue dealing with Israel, and the gravity of this precedent is that it is about an issue threatening the whole Arab security, the paper said. The newspaper expressed dismay and pain at this split in Arab stands on an issue as important as Israel's nuclear armament. It called for extracting every possible lesson of this incident which, it said, will undermine the status of the Arab League further.

## Jordanian Perspective

## Proposal to rechannel American aid worthy of support

THE JORDAN Times carried a report last week on a proposal made by a group of American church activists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) calling for a restructuring of American aid to the Middle East. It was not the first time the idea has been raised in principle, but it was indeed the first time that American groups got together and formulated a strategy that was recommended to the American administration while keeping in view the very U.S. objective of maintaining peace in the region. We have not heard much from Washington on the proposal, obviously because of efforts by the various lobbyists, interest groups, the defence establishment and the governments of Israel and Egypt — the two countries which stand to lose most if the administration were to adopt the proposal.

Of course, any effort to bury the proposal through influencing American policymakers, administration officials and lawmakers is a very short-sighted view. The very premise behind the annual \$3 billion American aid to Israel and \$2.1 billion to Egypt is maintaining peace in the Middle East after those countries signed the Camp David agreements in 1978. That fits in with the overall American goal of keeping those two countries from going to war (The \$5.1 billion does not include the assistance sent to Israel through other channels. Some estimates actually put the annual American aid, including the \$3 billion, to more than \$6 billion).

But, on the other hand, as the proposal rightly points out, the Camp David formula — at least in the context of the financial aid to Egypt and Israel — is no longer an effective framework to maintain peace in the Middle East. Other Arab countries have come into play, namely Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, as well as the Palestinians. Jordan and the Palestinians have already signed peace accords with Israel and it is only a matter of time before Syria and Lebanon do.

The proposal takes into close consideration the fact that

it is unlikely that the U.S. government, whether the Clinton administration or its successors, whether Republican or Democrat, is unlikely to make available more aid for the Middle East. If anything, the trend is to reduce the \$5.1 billion in view of the domestic American economy. However, it is also unlikely that the amount could be cut. That leaves us with the \$5.1 billion to consider as annual American aid to the Middle East to maintain peace. The question, rightly but implicitly raised in the proposal, is how sound is the idea to limit the beneficiaries of the assistance to Israel and Egypt while other parties in the region have also assumed equally dominant roles to play in peace.

What the concerned people in Washington should realise is relatively simple: They have a limited amount of money available to the Middle East region to serve the American objective of maintaining peace. The two beneficiaries who used to receive the amount over the past 15 years are no longer the only players. As such, the U.S. decision-makers should reconsider their priorities and come to the conclusion that the proposal that the amount channelled to regional projects whose output will be shared among two or more parties in the region is the best under the circumstances.

Needless to say, the proposal, if formally considered by the administration, will raise loud hues and cries in both Israel and Egypt. But, as authors of the proposal point out, there are voices which appreciate the long-term vision behind the proposal rather than narrowing their view to the immediate impact of the suspension of aid to the two countries.

For one thing, many Israelis see the wisdom that the amount their country will have to spend on maintaining a peace without its benefits to other people would be much higher than the actual amount of American aid. Those voices are little heard at this point in time, but would be loud and clear as and when they see Washington seriously entertaining the proposal.

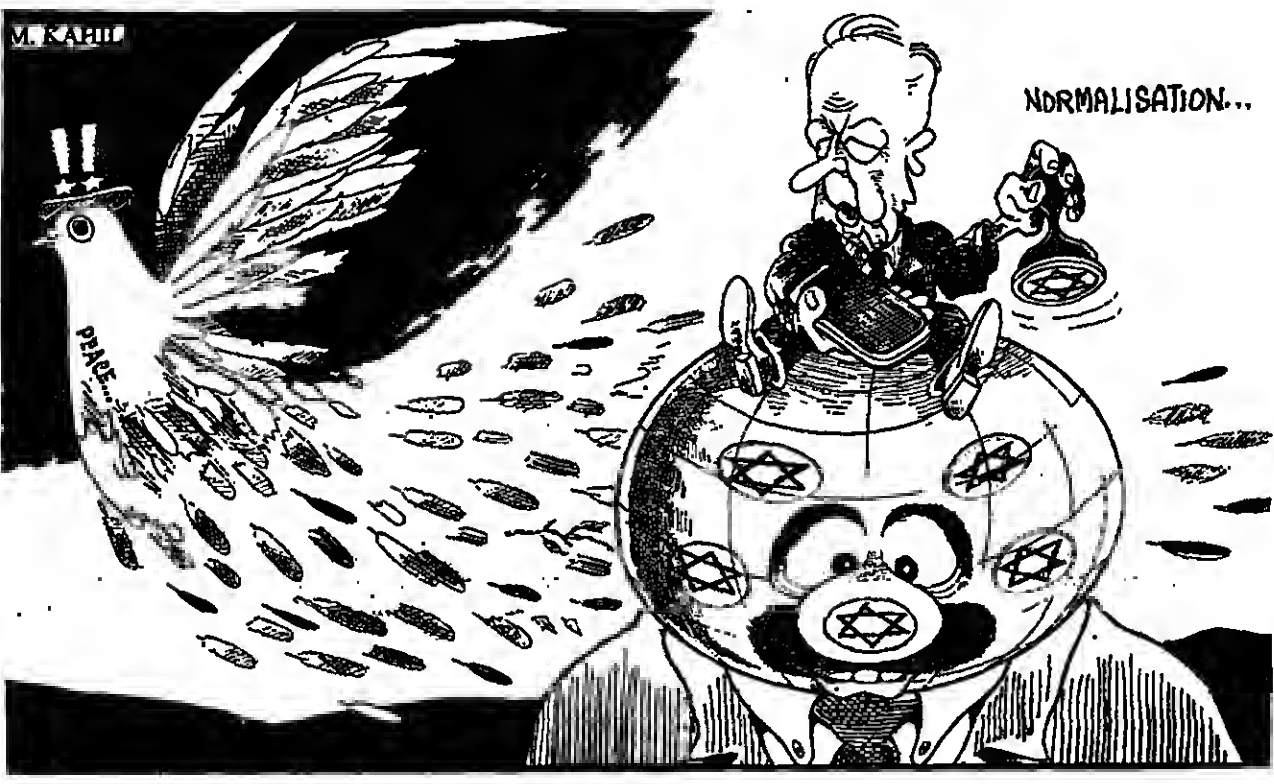
Sure enough, Egypt will fight the proposal tooth and nail. But if the tacticians in Cairo stop in their tracks for a moment and review closely the long-term benefits of aid being distributed in a regional context that would consolidate peace they would also realise that the \$2.1 billion in aid they receive every year is little when they compare it with the long-term benefits of unquestionable peace rooted in the common interests of all parties in the region.

Within the U.S., lobbyists who stand to gain materially from ensuring that Washington does not deviate from the present structure of aid to the Middle East will also put up a strong fight. So would the American defence establishment (given that more than half of the \$5.1 billion aid is in the form of military assistance that benefits American arms manufacturers). Again, it is an issue that has to be solved by the American administration.

There are several other aspects to the proposal, starting with (an unlikely) commitment by the leading arms merchants of the world not to sell sophisticated and expensive equipment to the Middle East since such sales would only add fuel to the arms race in the region, with every neighbour looking suspiciously at what the other has and seeking to come up with equitable equipment.

The emphasis that the proposal attaches to the role of NGOs is also very important. NGOs have a closer experience of working on the ground in the Middle East and they are fully aware of the needs of the Middle Eastern society, whether Palestinians, Egyptians, Jordanians, Syrians or Lebanese. The truth, much as many would not like to admit it, is that \$1 spent by the NGO in the region will have larger impact in terms of results in real terms than \$10 spent by governments or government agencies.

In short, the proposal is highly commendable, but is sure to face an uphill battle in the U.S. as well as the Middle East, and it might take years before Washington would even give it any serious consideration. But that does not mean that anyone should give up.



## Peace doesn't entail changing history

By Sa'eda Kilani

WRITERS AND columnists had a critical approach to this week's events. Al Karameh battle, the death of journalist Jumma Hammad and the Arab League's meetings in Cairo produced a mild but intense debate among Jordanian writers.

Al Ra'i newspaper columnist Mahmoud Rimawi stressed the need to constantly commemorate national anniversaries such as Al Karameh day, on March 21, at times of peace in particular. Peace does not necessitate a reconsideration of historical events, he said.

Mr. Rimawi said there should not be any change on school curricula, nor should history facts be altered, he said. Nobody, he added, can possibly interfere or change events that have become an integral part of history.

In the final analysis, Mr. Rimawi said, if wars were coming to an end, the political, religious, economic and information confrontations with Israel will not stop before all rights of Arab countries are restored.

In Al Dostour, Samih Ma'ayeh also stressed the importance of commemorating these days since they define the power struggle in the region.

Almost all columnists and writers have eulogised the dean of Journalism and former chairman of Jordan Press Foundation, Jumma'a Hammad, who passed away March 17. Raja El Issa, owner of the Jordan Distribution Agency and former colleague of Mr. Hammad, at the Jordan Press Foundation, Suleiman Machini, a writer and a poet, Fahed Al Fanek, economist, and Sultan Hattab, former chief editor of Sawt Al Shaab, said Mr. Ham-

mad's death was a great loss to the Kingdom.

In Al Ra'i, Mr. El Issa recollected the friendship he had with Mr. Hammad for over 30 years. When the history of the Jordan Press Foundation is written, Mr. El Issa said, Hajj Jumma'a will be remembered as its founder and the one who led the institution to the success it enjoys at present.

Mr. Machini started his eulogy by expressing his deep love and appreciation for Mr. Hammad. He said that he died at a time when the country is in need of such leaders. Dr. Fanek, however, regretted that Jordanian writers and columnists and the press in general attributed considerable attention to his death while they did not spare any criticism when he was alive.

## THE WEEK IN PRINT

Does the Jordanian journalist have to die to make his colleagues and friends honour and dignity him, value his contributions to the press and the nation, and write sweeping praise about his achievements, without any reservations, he asked.

Now that Mr. Hammad had died and does not pose a threat or competition any more, all his colleagues started lauding his achievements and contributions, he said.

In Al Ra'i also, Mr. Hattab said he was shocked to learn about Mr. Hammad's death, and listed the deceased's contributions to the press and to the columnist himself.

For the fourth consecutive week, daily and weekly columnists continued to write about the suspension of the two weeklies, Al Bilad and Hawadeth Al Sa'ah and the influence of the decision to close down the

two weeklies on the freedom of the press.

Chief editor of the Islamist weekly Al Sabeel, Hilmi Al Asmar, said that although he is against what he termed as the weeklies' publication of sensational news and violent stories, he did not believe that such a strict and uncompromising stand should be taken against them.

I used to think, he said, that there is more than one measure that can be taken before resorting to such a decision. The Jordan Press Association, in cooperation with the Ministry of Information and the Press and Publications Department, could have solved the issue peacefully before the problem aggravated, he said. Mr. Al Asmar expressed fears that Al Sabeel news-

paper, which has not been subject to any harassment or criticism until now, would, sooner or later, be forced to face the same fate.

Also in Al Sabeel, Yasser Za'atreh criticised the Press and Publications Department (PPD) for taking Al Majd weekly to court on the grounds that it has published an article that disparages the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Mr. Za'atreh questioned the validity of this accusation and whether or not the UAE President Sheikh Zayed-Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, has asked the PPD to file a case against Al Majd.

This is an issue that has to deal with the Press and Publications Law itself, a law that, unfortunately, has been approved by our deputies, he said. What does it mean when the law bans the publication of news that disparages presidents of Arab, Islamic, or friendly

states? he asked. And why don't Arab ambassadors try to stand up to the foreign press that does not stop talking about their countries and their presidents in any way it wants? he said.

Mr. Za'atreh said the law should be amended in accordance with democracy and freedom of the press and not with the martial law mentality.

Although he did not directly tackle the issue of the two papers, Ahmad Al Mischeh in Al Ra'i expressed his astonishment at the heated debate that has arisen over journalism and the freedom of the press, but concluded his column by stressing the importance of verified information and accurate reporting as vital instruments in a free press.

Writers also tackled the Arab League's meetings that ended in Cairo Thursday. In Al Dostour, Nabeel Al Sharif voiced his disappointment at the lack of coordination and disunity that characterises the Arab League.

Dr. Sharif mainly focused on the Gulf war and its impact on the Arab League. He said Arab countries have been divided into two camps against each other, otherwise, he asked, how can we find one reasonable explanation for the stand of the league's Secretary General who insists on ignoring the suffering of the Iraqi people and refuses to visit Iraq.

Mohammad Subeithi, a columnist at Al Ra'i questioned Egypt's motives behind raising the subject of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and making a big issue out of it. Does Egypt aim at achieving a kind of reconciliation between the government and the Egyptian people by doing that or is it trying to silence what has been said about the contacts between the Americans and the Islamic movements in Egypt?

## LETTERS

## Children have rights

To the Editor:

THE INTERNATIONAL Children's Day of Broadcasting, celebrated in Jordan at the end of 1994, was internationally recognised three years ago when the late James Grant, former executive director of UNICEF, asked for more attention to be paid to children's problems, to those victims and survivors of war, disease and famine.

I don't know how many people know that children, beside the right to be born, loved and live, the right to be fed when they are hungry, nursed when they are sick, helped when they are mentally and physically handicapped, have some more specific rights declared by the U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child:

1. Every child has the right to affection, love and understanding.
2. Every child has the right to full opportunity for play and recreation.
3. Every child has the right to learn to be a useful member of society and to develop individual abilities.
4. Every child has the right to be brought up in a spirit of peace and universal brotherhood.
5. Every child has the right to enjoy their rights regardless of race, colour, sex, religion or social origin.

With this in mind, I would like to make some comments concerning the child's problems in Jordan, especially problems in school. We all know how important school is and how school affects the child's behaviour at the end of each day. Each child is born with his/her own biological potential for growth, intellect and longevity. No individual is born with an inherited capacity for happiness or the ability to get on with and relate to other people, including teachers. These qualities are learned from those closest to him/her, the parents and later on the teachers will continue this hard work.

I strongly believe that beside improving the curriculum programme, we have to give children more opportunities and the self-image. In this way, some teachers might find out that children are both talented and extremely entertaining, therefore the teachers should enjoy the child's mind.

I've been participating in many parent meetings (as a parent) but I've never heard a teacher saying that our children are not "intelligent" or "not bad" but "thinkers." I believe that teachers should encourage children to see themselves as thinkers. In this way they are prepared to listen to others and are more interested in ideas, so indirectly they can become better in learning.

With such an attitude, any child is bound to experience more satisfaction and success in both school and life. But the question is, when does a child find the time to think? With so many exams, tests and so much to memorise, a child has no time to think.

Believe it or not, the children do think earlier and in far more complex ways than most of us even believe. And yet, in some schools teachers talk too much (and pupils too little) and are often insensitive to the child's mind.

So much effort is invested in the quantity not the quality of education. After all, as Prof. B.F. Skinner once said: "Education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten."

On the other hand parents should communicate more with their children, encourage, listen and respect them. When children are respected, they are more liable to show respect.

Encouragement both from teachers and parents need to come from the heart. For it is difficult maybe to love and to encourage until we experience being loved and encouraged ourselves. Parents and teachers alike have to be an example to our children. I do believe that time has come when we have to try education, discipline and seriousness.

Therefore, more attention should be paid to the quality of children's programmes on television. The Ministry of Education should take notice and action, it should provide more facilities for children, encourage them to participate in school festivals, exhibitions and competitions.

More recreational places should be built, more parks, youth centres where children can meet, talk, exchange ideas and have fun too.

Daniela Luminita Dabbes,  
Amman.

## Help appreciated

To the Editor:

THE JORDANIAN Society for the Protection of Animals (JSPA), whose new headquarters and second clinic were inaugurated by Her Royal Highness Princess Nafsa Bint Ali, deputising for Her Royal Highness Princess Zein on Saturday in Wadi Seer, wish to state that the society has been greatly helped by a number of generous donors, notably the Greater Amman Municipality which offered land for the building, SPANA London and the European Union, which each donated half the cost of the clinic and the Canadian embassy, which donated many electronic machines, cameras, illustration equipment and the funding of printing of pamphlets and posters to support the education programme. The Ministry of Agriculture also gave much help and advice and local companies funded laboratory and clinic equipment. Donations came from local and foreign people.

Miss Chris Larter, JSPA, Wadi Seer,  
Amman.



## The right side of the track

Yo Mike!

AS A FELLOW black American male who has survived life in the U.S. for slightly more than half a century without spending a (non-related civil rights) moment in jail and has managed to avoid the debilitating pitfalls of alcohol and drug addiction, I believe there are a few things I can pull your coat to that can help you stay on the street once you are released from prison today.

Over the last few years you have had plenty of time to reflect on your life, I hope you put it to good use. Some of the things I have heard about your activities behind bars strike me as a positive development.

There has been much talk about your discovery of books. On the face of it this is a positive development, although I would like to have had a hand in selecting your reading lists since your choice of books seems to be eclectic, reflecting neither rhyme nor reason. I would have recommended a more focused selection to fill the gaps in your understanding of how the African-American community has survived and often prospered under the constant stress of racist public policies.

This is no picaresque issue Mike, because I am convinced that part of the problem which you face, and other poorly raised young black men like you (even those who acquire fame and fortune such as rappers Tupac Shakur, Snoop Doggy Dog, et al) is a profound ignorance of the heroic tradition of struggle and triumph over great odds that characterise the history of African-Americans.

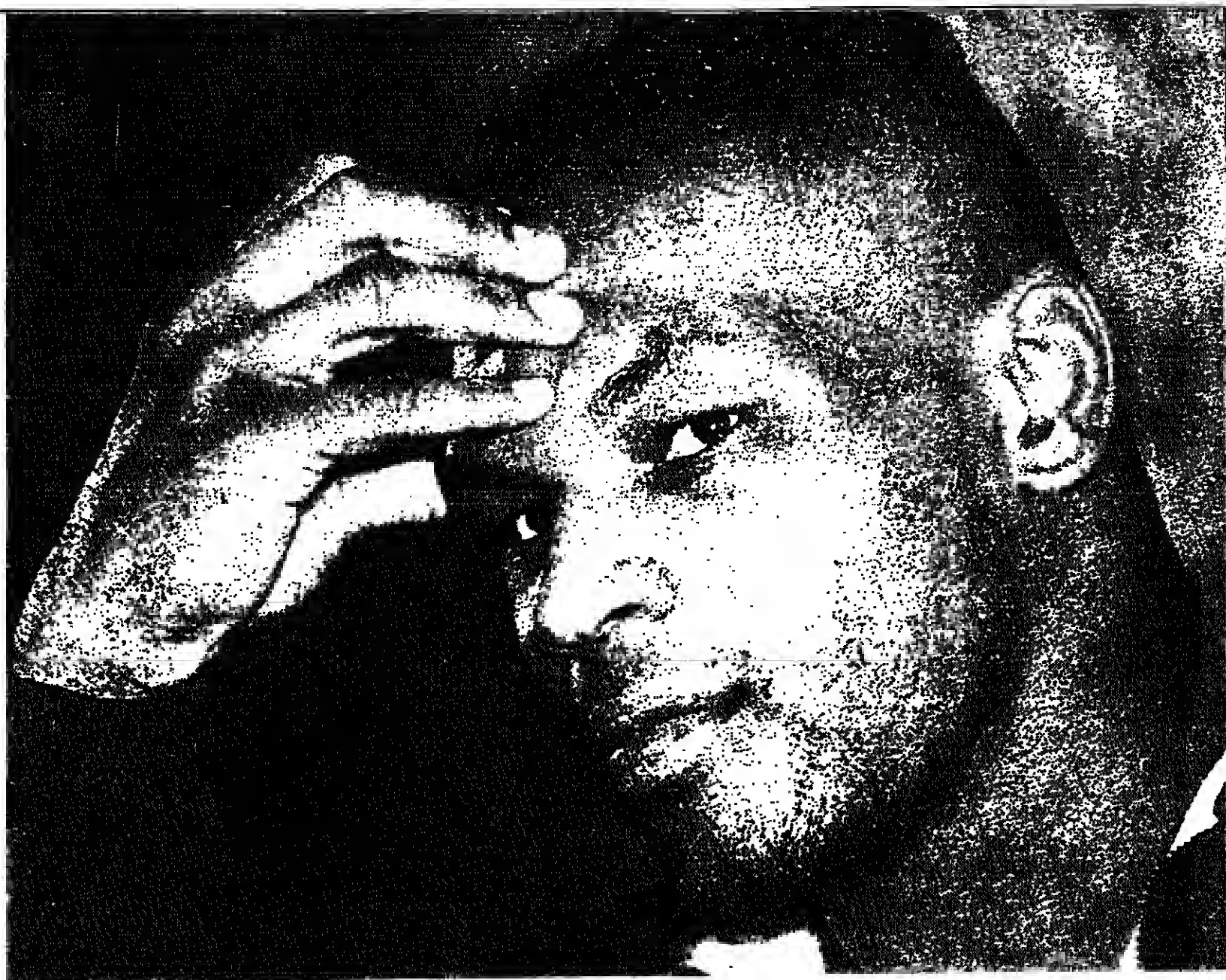
Hence, at top of my list for you would be From

Slavery To Freedom, a brilliant survey of our history written by the great Afro-American historian John Hope Franklin. Then I would have you read the Life And Times Of Frederick Douglass, Booker T Washington's Up From Slavery, Dr. W. E. B. Dubois's Dusk of Dawn, Paul Robeson's On These I Stand, Joe Louis's My Life, the autobiography of Malcolm X, Brent Staples's Parallel Lives, and Where And When I Enter, Paula Giddings's splendid history of black women in America.

These books will open up a new world to you Mike, a world where black men and women are thinkers and doers, agents in their own destiny and a destiny of the American nation. Furthermore, in these texts you would encounter the core cultural values that has enabled so many Afro-Americans to not only endure, but triumph over the persistent racial discrimination that is woven into the fabric of society. I believe if you had known more about these matters there is an excellent chance you would never have gone to prison in the first place.

But don't get me wrong, Mike, I'm not one of those who argue that you are a victim of racism against black men. In fact, I become nauseous when I hear the special pleading of those who attempt to portray you as the victim. Since I was not in the room with you and the young lady on that fateful night in Indiana, a night you will no doubt long remember, I cannot say with certainty what happened; perhaps there is more to the story. But I do know that your prior behaviour with women and your verbal ex-

**FREE AGAIN:** Former heavy weight boxing champion Mike Tyson who leaves prison today after spending about three years behind bars for raping a former Miss America (File photo)



pressions of contempt for them to myself and ex-high heavyweight champion Jose Torres — such as the fact that you enjoy physically hurting them — convinces me that you were certainly capable of the assault for which you were convicted. I hate to admit it Mike, but many Afro-Americans disagree with me regarding you. I'm often surprised at some of the people who have come to your defence. One of your most unlikely supporters is my own mother, which is surprising because a great part of the reason why I never liked you is due to values I learned from her. You see,

my mother, a paragon of respectability, is a product of the aristocratic southern American tradition adopted by the "coloured gentry," a class whose values determine the morals and manners of the Afro-American middle-class. And you, Mike, are counter to everything they stood for.

But my mother views you as a victim because she grew up in the South at a time when innocent black men were routinely murdered because of false rape charges. And her own Victorian attitudes regarding proper behaviour for young ladies leads her to conclude that the woman

you were convicted of raping asked for it. I disagree. I feel that even if she intended to seduce you, but changed her mind at the 11th hour, you should have played past it, walked away. Considering the number of noble groupies who were ready to do your bidding, your behaviour bears eloquent testimony to the feminist argument that men who rape are not interested in sex but in using violence to intimidate and dominate women.

Although you have maintained, your innocence to the end, if you wish to avoid the same pitfalls in the fu-

ture, you should be very sceptical of those who tell you that you have done nothing wrong, that you are the victim. According to your first trainer, Teddy Atlas, that was part of your problem to begin with. That's what was wrong with your much celebrated relationship with Cus D'Amato, the legendary trainer of boxing champions, whom you have referred to as a surrogate father; he wouldn't tell you when your behaviour was unacceptable, so long as it didn't affect your performance in the ring.

Like Tony Ayala Jr, the great middleweight boxer

who would have been world champion had he not gone to prison for rape, you were raised to fight. While that may be a fine way to bring up a pit bull, it has proven disastrous for human beings. And you Mike, are a classic case in point. For, thus far, you have turned out to be a great fighter but not much of a man. That's why, Mike, it is important for you to understand that the great obstacles which you will have to struggle to overcome in life are not in the ring.

With a geriatric case owning one part of the world's heavyweight championship belt, and a cheese

champ holding the other, recapturing the world heavyweight title will be easy pickings for a pugilist of your splendid gifts. The real challenge will be moderating your rage and egoistic impulses to avoid the type of behaviour that will land your butt back in prison. And that can only happen if you confess to your former friends and struggle to change your ways before somebody ends your days. Best wishes for the future.

The above commentary is reprinted from The Guardian

## Gore urges end to violence

(Continued from page 1)

not. The U.S. promise of aid rang hollow for many Palestinians.

Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, we've been hearing of hundreds of projects and millions of dollars in aid, but we don't see anything on the ground," said Waheed Dweik, a 35-year-old wholesale vegetable dealer.

Mr. Dweik and most other Jericho residents never caught a glimpse of Mr. Gore and Mr. Arafat as hundreds of Palestinian policemen blocked off roads when the two leaders' motorcade raced through this sleepy oasis, sirens wailing.

The two men met at Mr. Arafat's new government compound, set amid fields and orange groves. Earlier Friday, Mr. Arafat promised a cheering crowd in his speech from the balcony of Jericho's city hall that he would soon take control of the West Bank despite Israel's reluctance to withdraw its troops.

"The message is clear. We are close to taking the rest of the West Bank," Mr. Arafat said. "I feel that we are at the end of a long road."

"He (Gore) promised to support us to save the peace process and to push the Israelis so we can have a quick implementation of what has been agreed upon," Mr. Arafat told reporters after Mr. Gore left to catch his plane in Israel.

Israel and the PLO have set a July 1 deadline for finishing talks on expanding self-rule to the West Bank beyond Jericho, and holding elections.

But Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told Mr. Gore on Thursday that implementation depended on Mr. Arafat curbing attacks on Israelis by opponents of the peace agreement.

Mr. Arafat declined comment on the Israeli crack-down condition.

Mr. Gore and Mr. Arafat witnessed the signing of loan accords at a ceremony without flags and anthems. The White House did not want Mr. Gore next to a Palestinian flag and it also had a picture of East Jerusalem removed, PLO officials said. Mr. Arafat, however, insisted on a Palestinian police honour guard to greet Mr. Gore.

Such symbols are important in a process which has brought ordinary Palestinians few tangible benefits.

Of the \$2.4 billion pledged by international donors in aid after the 1993 Oslo accords, only \$300 million has arrived. Gaza's economy is collapsing, its workers unable to cross into Israel since suicide bombings.

Jericho is a town of billboards on idle construction sites, its fledgling economic boom stunted by Mr. Arafat's decision to make Gaza his interim headquarters.

Mr. Gore said Washington will have contributed \$150 million by September this year out of a total of \$500 million pledged for 1994-1998.

On Thursday, Mr. Gore welcomed a compromise Arab League resolution on extending the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The resolution, adopted at a two-day meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Cairo, described Israel's long-time refusal to sign the treaty as

dangerous. But it charted no course of action for Arab states if Israel still declined to become a signatory.

"We have... said that an indefinite extension of the NPT should not be linked to the decision by any additional state to become a signatory to the treaty," Mr. Gore told a news conference, calling the resolution a "positive development."

Mr. Gore, also restated the Clinton administration's intention of continuing to grant Israel \$3 billion a year in aid.

In separate talks with Mr. Gore, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres reiterated that Israel would become a signatory to the NPT only after two years of a comprehensive peace to the Middle East, Mr. Peres' aides said.

Mr. Gore also said last week's joint American-Israeli military manoeuvres showed relations between the two countries were "at an all-time high."

"We have just completed the largest joint exercise in the history of the bilateral relationship," Mr. Gore told reporters after a meeting Mr. Rabin.

American troops began exercises in Israel last week with a total of 7,500 U.S. troops involved in manoeuvres with Israeli ground and air forces.

Although combined military exercises and rescue drills have taken place periodically since the U.S. and Israel signed a strategic cooperation agreement in 1982, last week's were the most publicised and reportedly the most extensive.

"Our communication and cooperation in every dimension of the relationship is at an all time high," Mr. Gore said.

crime punishable by up to 20 years in prison, rather than releasing them.

At a news conference Thursday, Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh hinted the men would be put on trial. Mr. Saleh said the government hasn't decided whether to do that, but noted: "We have laws in Iraq, as there are laws in the United States."

"They are safe, they are well-treated," Mr. Saleh said, appearing to link their fate to the U.N. sanctions.

## Turks bomb villages

(Continued from page 1)

since Monday by the Turkish army — to camps farther south near a town called Atrush.

Some 9,000 people are already crowded into two camps near Atrush, he said.

Another 200 anguished families have asked to be moved to the camps near Atrush. But Mr. Colville said this was impossible for the moment because it would mean travelling through the war zone.

Turkey launched the intervention to end a power vacuum in the region, Prime Minister Tansu Ciller said in an interview Friday.

Ms. Ciller, who was responding to journalists' questions in a BBC world service programme, said Turkey would ask for help from the European Union and other allies to resolve what she called the international problem of having no clear authority in northern Iraq. Turkey is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

She added that Turkey had lost a lot because of the Gulf war, but did not elaborate.

In a separate interview Friday in the Turkish daily Sabah, Ms. Ciller again said Turkey had "no intention of remaining" in northern Iraq and that its army would "withdraw as soon as its mission is finished."

"The West must understand one thing: we respect Iraq's territorial integrity but we will take measures to head off attacks against our territory" from northern Iraq, she said.

The European Union on

Thursday demanded a rapid end to the massive Turkish offensive.

France said Turkey had a right to fight "terrorists" but would not solve the Kurdish question through military force.

French foreign ministry spokesman Richard Duple told reporters: "We condemn PKK terrorism."

He quoted Foreign Minister Alain Juppe as saying Turkey was "entitled to ensure its security by fighting and attacking terrorist bases."

But he said the operation in northern Iraq exceeded the right of armed forces to cross a border in hot pursuit.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, accompanying Mr. Juppe on a troika mission of immediate past, present and future EU presidents, told the Turks in Ankara on Thursday the devastating effect images of the first dead civilians would have on public opinion.

"The moment the world sees the picture of the first civilian casualty in northern Iraq, things will become very difficult for Turkey," Mr. Kinkel told reporters.

Political analysts say Turkey has underestimated the impact its action would have on public opinion in Western Europe, where sympathy for Kurdish nationalist aspirations is strong and the Turkish military is viewed with deep suspicion.

The Turkish military meanwhile denied it was violating a ban on the use of German-supplied tanks and other arms in the military push in northern Iraq.

## Israelis see Palestinian state

(Continued from page 1)

were undecided.

General elections are to take place in November 1996 at the latest.

In another opinion survey published Thursday, 67 per cent of Palestinians said they favoured continuing the autonomy talks — the highest figure so far recorded.

Palestinian elections to a new self-rule council were planned for July 13 last year but have been delayed.

Israel and the PLO have now agreed on a July 1 target date on extending Palestinian self-rule.

However, Mr. Rabin has linked the July 1 deadline to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat curbing anti-Israel guerrillas, Mr. Rabin's spokesman said on Friday.

Spokesman Oded Ben-Ami confirmed Israeli media reports Mr. Rabin told U.S. Vice President Al Gore in talks on Thursday that the deadline depended on Mr. Arafat's "curbing terrorism."

Asked if he could confirm the reports, Mr. Ben-Ami said: "Yes I can."

Israel's Jerusalem Post daily said participants at the meeting between Mr. Gore and Mr. Rabin afterward reminded Israeli reporters Mr. Rabin had long said dates set for stages of the 1993 PLO-Israel peace deal were not "holy."

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said in an interview published on Friday the 1993 peace accord with the PLO had caused political problems for Israel but he did

not regret it. "I regret nothing," he told the French daily Le Figaro. "We did the only thing we could do. But we face difficulties today. We must not hide them."

Mr. Peres said the peace process so far had been "like passing your wedding night on a minefield," but he remained optimistic about the deal.

"I have never in my life been a pessimist. Never," he said.

Asked if the accord granting limited self-rule to the Palestinians had been a political loss, Mr. Peres said: "In Israel, the people do not support us. They say, 'you make peace, you give up land, and we are always afraid. Show us what you have gained.'"



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## Ekeus rejects U.S. charges

(Continued from page 1)

Americans held in custody since they strayed across the border from Kuwait 10 days ago.

The Americans were arrested only metres from the Iraq-Kuwait border. They have been identified as David Daliberti, 41, and Bil Barloon, 39, both employees of American military contractors in Kuwait.

One source who insisted on anonymity confirmed the men are being held in Baghdad and are in good condition, but refused to give further details. Another source said Thursday they were visited by Western diplomats.

The fact that Iraq has begun to allow them visitors suggests that the government may be leaning toward charging them with illegal entry, a

## Peres ordered abduction

(Continued from page 12)

like Israel's nuclear capability. Haaretz said in an editorial on Thursday that information access was making censorship impossible.

"Attempts to regulate information, control it or to block it are becoming impossible," Haaretz said. The editorial noted that the changing situation was likely to prove "embarrassing" to government attempts to censor information.

According to Western ex-

perts, Israel has an arsenal of some 200 atomic bombs and long-range missiles such as the Jericho-2 which can be equipped with nuclear warheads.

Officially Israel has insisted that it "will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East."

Israel has refused to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or open the Dimona centre up to international inspection. Egypt is spearheading an Arab campaign to have it sign up.



## IMF shelves \$55b plan to aid world economy

WASHINGTON (R) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has shelved a controversial plan to pump some \$55 billion into the world economy after rich and poor nations were unable to agree on it, a key policymaker said Thursday.

Philippe Maystadt, head of the IMF's policy-making Interim Committee, told reporters that the proposal would not be on the agenda at the fund's semi-annual meeting here next month.

The \$55 billion plan had been championed by IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus as a way to help meet growing global demands for capital and had the backing of developing nations.

Under the proposal, the IMF would have effectively created money out of thin air via an issue of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs).

But rich industrial countries, especially Germany, had opposed the plan, saying they saw no need for it. A compromise proposal, put forward by the United States and Britain, for a smaller, more-targeted SDR issue has also been shelved.

With the SDR issue in abeyance, next month's IMF meeting is expected to be dominated by recent turmoil in the currency markets and the fall-out from the Mexico crisis.

Saying that major nations were unlikely to strike a currency pact to control the volatile markets, Mr. Maystadt suggested that the IMF could play a greater role in overseeing their foreign exchange policies.

"It doesn't seem like (that) kind of (currency) agreement is the appropriate solution at the present time," Mr. Maystadt said. "(So) you need to find another way to improve cooperation between major industrial nations. Maybe the fund and the managing director can help."

But he acknowledged that such a role was likely to be limited to at most that of an "honest broker."

Mr. Maystadt also suggested the IMF should consider borrowing from well-off developing nations like Singapore so it has enough cash to handle future Mexico-style economic crises.

"If you have a second Mexico-type crisis, the fund could deal with (it)," he said. "But if there is a third one, we will have a problem."

## Poorest nations seen faring better this year

GENEVA (R) — The world's poorest nations should enjoy slightly higher economic growth this year but its benefits will be offset by population rises, according to a United Nations report.

The annual "Least Developed Countries Report", from the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), predicts gross domestic product growth of 2.3 per cent in the poorest economies, up from an average of less than 1.6 per cent during 1990-94.

Population growth, however, is estimated at just under three per cent, meaning that

per capita income rates will continue to decline for the 580 million inhabitants of the 48 countries designated by the U.N. as least developed countries (LDCs).

The report says that economic performances between the LDCs vary considerably. About a quarter of them have registered notable increases in output during the first half of the 1990s, usually through expansion of agriculture, government commitment to development and international support.

Others — most notably Rwanda — have seen severe economic dislocation because of conflict, population dis-

placements and breakdown of the system of government.

A large majority of LDCs have been undertaking structural adjustment programmes and policy reforms since the early 1980s to improve economic efficiency, promote private enterprise and liberalise external trade.

But the UNCTAD report is generally critical of those programmes, mostly carried out with the support of the World Bank or International Monetary Fund, saying they have not succeeded in removing structural constraints.

"The LDCs have been expected to implement policies not always designed to suit

their conditions and to accomplish too much, too soon, and with too few resources," the report comments.

The report is also unenthusiastic about the LDCs' treatment under the Uruguay Round trade accord concluded last year and currently being ratified by governments.

It said that by the early 1990s, the LDCs' share of world exports had fallen from 0.6 per cent in 1980 to just 0.3 per cent. The ratio of exports to gross domestic product fell from over 17 per cent to 14 per cent over the same period.

LDCs growing marginalisation in world trade was largely due to the sluggish world demand for primary commodities. Although 1995's higher predicted growth reflects stronger demand, the report warns that market sentiment could be quickly reversed.

On top of that, UNCTAD said, LDCs may now suffer from the erosion of their preferential margins on key exports to traditional major markets because of the generalised tariff reductions under the Uruguay Round accord which will end their competitive advantage.

## Shares brighten as dollar creeps up

LONDON (R) — A late comeback by the dollar coasted stock markets into a late but sharp rally Friday as they struggled free from the burden of a strong mark, although gains appeared fragile.

A perkier dollar tested a key level above 1.41 marks and clambered just above 89 yen. The mark softened, devalued by sales from investors seeking to take profits.

But dealers say the dollar remains within striking distance of historically weak territory, after it set yet another record low below 88 yen overnight in Tokyo.

Wall Street skipped nearly one per cent ahead soon after the session kicked off, setting the stage for late gains in Europe. Most European stock exchanges ended higher.

London's stock market — Europe's largest — stormed above a key support level as Wall Street surged.

German shares, which have shed about 10 per cent since the start of the month, reversed early losses to end modestly higher in after hours trading.

Frankfurt's exchange lost heavily Thursday as investors piled out, fearful a firm mark would dent corporate earnings.

German authorities reminded markets they remained sensitive to the impacts of a firm mark.

Economics Minister Guenter Rexrodt warned that turbulent currencies and Germany's recent high wage settlements threatened the country's economic recovery.

"The recovery is still in a take-off phase, and fragile," he said in a speech.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Theo Waigel emphasised Germany would continue to pursue exchange rate stability, and rejected complaints about the mark's strength.

## Italian appointed head of world trade body

GENEVA (R) — Former Italian trade minister Renato Ruggiero was officially appointed first long-term director-general of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Friday, officials said.

The decision, taken by the WTO's 128 present and pending members at a meeting of the general council, was a foregone conclusion after envoys on Thursday agreed to nominate him.

An official statement agreed at the WTO meeting said: "The general council formally appoints Ruggiero who will take office on May 1 and serve as director-general for a four-year term."

But several countries, including France and Switzerland, took the floor to complain that a bad precedent had been set by the nine-month race, marked by regional divisions and damag-

ing horse-trading, according to delegates at the closed-door talks.

The 64-year-old Ruggiero, who was the official candidate of the European Union for the WTO job, pledged Thursday he would work for global free trade and to ensure fair treatment of developing countries.

He will replace Peter Sutherland of Ireland, who has headed the organisation since its launch on Jan. 1 to replace the old General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Mr. Sutherland has been GATT chief since July 1993.

The council instructed the WTO budget committee to take measures immediately to create a new post — a fourth deputy director-general — under Mr. Ruggiero, so as to accommodate his defeated rival, South Korea's ex-trade Minister

Kim Chul-su.

This decision, also endorsed by WTO envoys Thursday, has caused major dissension among developing countries, particularly African states who have no representations at top level in the body and insist their status must be upgraded.

The way was paved for Mr. Ruggiero's nomination after Washington, which had backed former Mexican president Carlos Salinas de Gortari until he pulled out this month, swung over to the Italian's camp and persuaded Seoul to withdraw Mr. Kim.

But the backstage deal angered many developing countries and was seen as damaging the credibility of the embryonic trade organisation intended to symbolise a new era of cooperation.

Switzerland's trade ambassador William Rosier, in a

speech Friday, said his host country was very unhappy at the use of WTO's management structures to satisfy regional problems, delegates reported.

France told delegates that it regretted that "bad seeds had been sown" in the final stages of the nine-month contest.

Mr. Ruggiero, who served as Italy's foreign trade minister from 1987 to 1991, launched the programme for the liberalisation of his country's foreign trade and capital movements.

A lawyer and professional diplomat, he also served in various posts for the European Commission in Brussels, including spokesman for then European Community president Roy Jenkins.

He is currently executive vice chairman of the International advisory board of Fiat SPA.

## Russian premier seeks tough policies, says economy still fragile

MOSCOW (R) — Russia promised to crack down on spending and inflation Friday, but warned that an early turnaround in a vulnerable economy could not yet be guaranteed.

"The Russian economy is starting to stabilise, but the positive changes are still very fragile," Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin told a meeting of regional and government leaders in the ornate Marble Hall of the Kremlin.

"This year can and must become the turning point in the economic crisis," he added.

Outlining government economic plans for the next three years, Mr. Chernomyrdin said Russia could not increase spending without ensuring that money was available to fund new projects.

Fighting in breakaway Chechnya had not yet hurt a tight 1995 budget, but a peaceful settlement there was an essential precondition for

continued economic reform, he said.

"There are grounds for concern about spending on Chechnya and... we need a peaceful settlement for reforms to continue, but the economic price of the conflict does not yet reach beyond the framework of the (1995) budget," he said.

Russia sent tanks and troops into the Caucasus region on Dec. 11 and thousands of people have died in the expensive military campaign. Many Chechen cities have been reduced to rubble and the infrastructure has been destroyed.

Mr. Chernomyrdin said the fate of Russia's economic reforms depended to a large extent on the country's ability to keep monetary policies tight. "We should not relax policy throughout the whole year," he said.

"It is difficult now, and will be even more difficult when seasonal factors take effect in

the second half. But if we let the presses start printing money again and hope things will sort themselves out after that, we can forget about economic reform," he added.

The government programme says the economy will start to grow next year, monthly inflation will fall to one or two per cent in the second half and foreign investment will begin to rise.

Inflation was a monthly 11 per cent in February. The government aims to cut the year-on-year rate to 15 or 20 per cent by 1996 and 1997 from about 200 per cent in 1994.

Mr. Chernomyrdin said Russia intended to bring the budget deficit down to five per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1996 and three per cent in 1997.

A tough budget was a precondition for a big standby loan from the International Monetary Fund and 1995 spending plans envisage a

shortfall of seven or eight per cent of GDP.

But Mr. Chernomyrdin said Russia would not spend money it did not have. "There will be tough requirements for the use of budget money allocated for special purposes," he said.

"If there is no additional income you will have to forget about additional expenses," he added.

Reforms launched in 1992 have shifted Russia's economy from the rigid central planning and unrealistic production targets of Soviet days to a freer, more flexible system modelled on the market economies of the West.

In the past, factory managers overreported output to show they had fulfilled the plan. Now they hide production to avoid taxes, distorting already unreliable data and making it hard to judge the size of Russia's long industrial decline.

## Israeli-Egyptian trade increases since peace progress

CAIRO (R) — Trade between Egypt and Israel has suddenly taken off and Israeli imports of Egyptian goods will probably double this year, the man in charge of Israel's stand at the Cairo International Fair said Friday.

Shaul Sasson, an official of the Israeli ministry of trade and industry, told Reuters the self-rule agreement between Israel and the Palestinians in 1993 was the watershed after years of stagnation at a volume of around \$10 million a year.

Mr. Sasson was speaking as hundreds of curious Egyptians queued to enter Israel's stand, the first at the Cairo fair since an embassy attaché was shot dead nearly 10 years ago.

Some 30 Israeli companies and institutions are taking part, exhibiting electronics, jewellery, cosmetics, computer products and medical and agricultural equipment.

Mr. Sasson denied Israel stayed away for the past decade because the Egyptian authorities objected to their presence. "Nobody in Israel wanted to come here. Trade relations were very cold. But after the Oslo agreement you can see a big jump," he said.

The volume of non-oil trade, with the balance slightly in favour of Egypt, was \$20.5 million in all of 1993, \$13 million in the first half of 1994 and \$30.9 million in the second half.

"I'm sure the figures for imports (of Egyptian goods) will be double this year because of the peace process. The other reason is that the Egyptians did many bureaucratic things to restrict exports, and Israel did the same in response," he said.

Until last year, Israel re-

quired import licences for Egyptian products and tended not to grant them if the products would compete with Israeli-made goods. Now they treat Egyptian goods the same as they treat, say, Turkish or Japanese goods.

"When peace broke out, I think the Egyptians began to understand that they might miss something and be left behind. They haven't lifted all the restrictions yet but the general approach is very positive," Mr. Sasson said.

The trade official said Israel's strategy for the Arab World was to use trade as a bridge to build political confidence.

"One Arab fear has been that Israel wants to dominate them by economic colonialism. We are aware of this and don't want to be seen as dominators, though we are the strongest economy. Instead we see trade in a political way and we want both sides to see that peace is fruitful for both," he added.

Hillel Hodak, exhibiting at the fair for ESC computers of Ramat-Gan, said his visit had largely achieved its targets.

"We came to check out the market, to see if business is possible and find a potential distributor," he said.

"We have found a lot of leads and now we just have to make it operative. I feel that they (Egyptian businessmen) are interested in us. We're talking business," he added.

Egyptian opposition groups had planned demonstrations against Israel's presence at the fair Friday but police at the gates said no one had tried to assemble.

The leftist Arab Nasserite Democratic Party said Thursday police detained 13 of its members.

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY MARCH 25, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Flighter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Study your financial status and make plans to have more security in the future. Find a better way to be more productive at work today.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You want to have more abundance in the future, but make sure your plans are practical. Be sure to relax at home tonight with loved ones.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Don't do anything at this time that could jeopardise your fine reputation. Sidestep one who is detrimental to your progress in a project that is important to you.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You are tempted to be too extravagant now, so take the right steps to control the situation immediately. Clear up whatever is in error and settle down this evening.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Contact a most successful person who can give you good ideas now. Avoid the social scene tonight and concentrate on business affairs which must be completed.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Forget those ideas of expansion right now and take care of the problems at hand today. Take pains to handle routine tasks in an effective manner and then go on and solve more pressing problems.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Make sure to carry through with promises you've made. Keep busy at tasks that could bring you increased income and prosperity.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Applying yourself with more vigour today could result in added income. Don't neglect to pay a bill which has come due.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Use your ability to solve a difficult problem. You have excellent judgement now and can easily gain the aims you desire.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Strive to be more efficient at work today and have more support with fellow associates. Be more serious and get good results for your efforts.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Study whatever has been puzzling you in the past and come up with the right answers today. Your hunches are accurate now for any decision you must make.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Be sure not to invest more than you can afford, or you're sure to regret it later. Take modern treatment to improve your health and well-being.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper

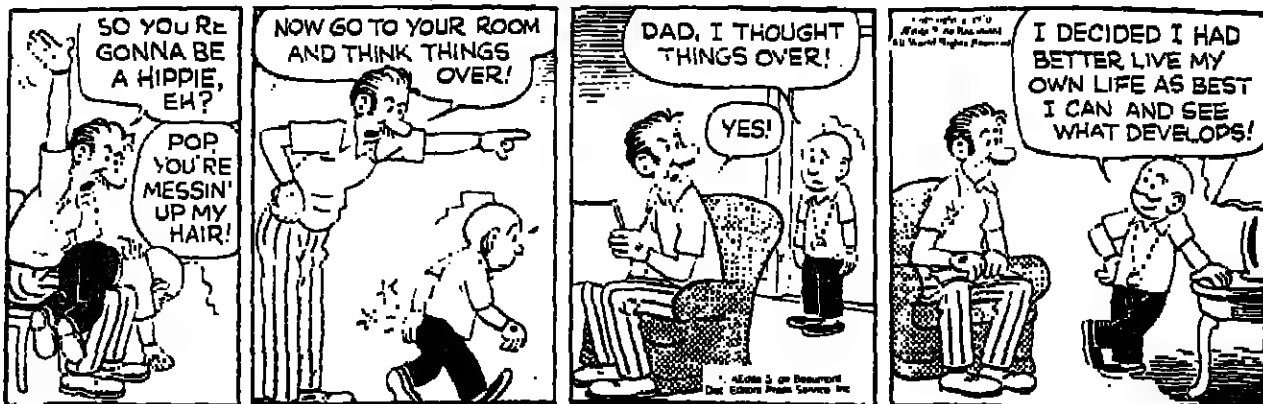
## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



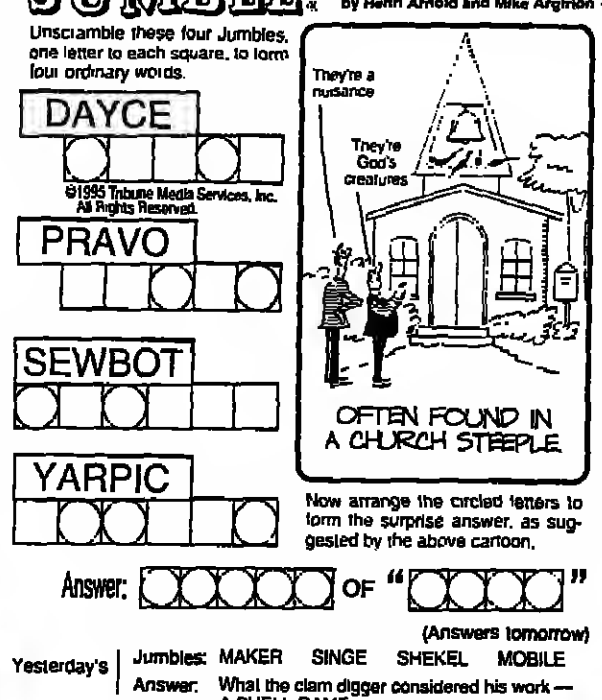
## Mutt'n'Jeff



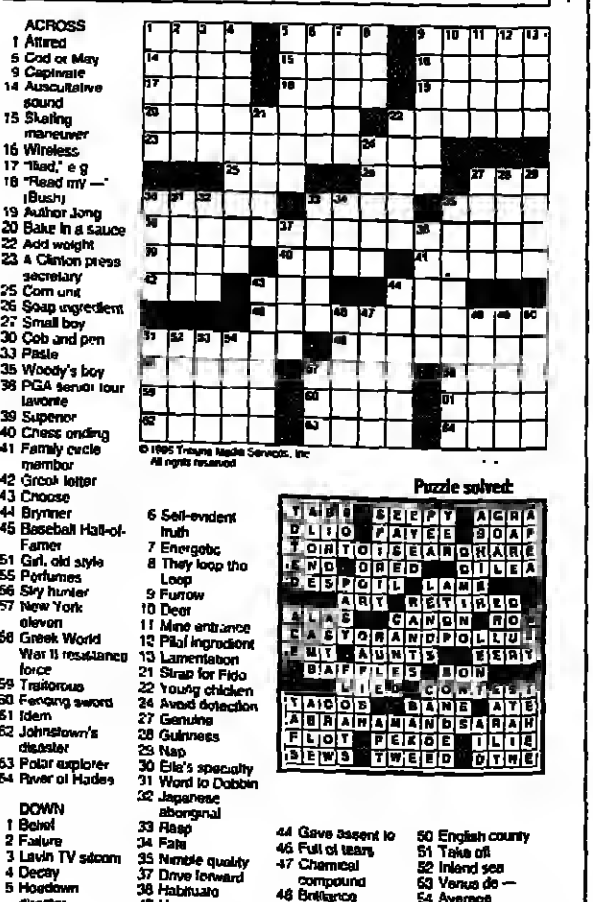
## THE BETTER HALF



## JUMBLE



## THE Daily Crossword





# Price index dips below psychological point at AFM

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Stocks at the Amman stock market took another beating this week and the official price index dipped to its lowest since 1993 against a continuing crunch on liquidity as speculators moved capital away from the bourse to more lucrative short-term commercial bank deposits, dealers said.

Also contributing to the run on capital was the release of primary stocks by companies seeking to raise capital, said the dealers.

The weekly Amman Financial Market (AFM) showed turnover during the week ending Thursday rose to JD 5.6 million, up 14 per cent from the previous week's JD 4.9 million.

The official AFM index closed for the week at 139.1 points after losing 1.3 points or 0.9 per cent from the

week's opening of 140.4 points, the first such dip since July 1993.

Industrials shed 1.4 points or 1.2 per cent during the week, commercial banks and financial institutions 0.9 points or 0.6 per cent, the service sector lost 3.3 points or 2.5 per cent, and insurance shares dipped by 1.4 points or 1.2 per cent.

Industrials topped weekly trading with a volume of JD 2.42 million. The services sector and commercial banks came behind with JD 1.52 million and JD 1.51 million

and insurance stock with JD 160,000 (\$232,000).

The AFM report said 2.2 million shares changed hands during the week. Stocks of 77 companies from among the 120 listed in the market were traded during the week. As trading closed, 15 of them showed gains, 53 lost and nine remained stable during the week.

AFM dealers said the run on capital in the market was continuing as commercial banks maintained offers of yields up to 9.5 per cent for short-term deposits after

three-month and six-month certificates of deposits issued by the Central Bank hiked interest rates in the past several weeks.

Furthermore, said the dealers who cannot be identified by name under standing market instructions, fresh issues by commercial banks under central bank orders to raise their capital and companies seeking capital for expansion were drawing funds away from the AFM floor.

According brokers, primary issues worth JD 700 mil-

lion are expected to be in the offing before end of 1996. This includes up to JD 250 million sought by commercial banks which have a Dec. 31, 1996 deadline to raise their capital to JD 20 million.

"The market is in a severe crisis of liquidity," said a dealer. "Unless the interest rates go down — which seems unlikely — or institutions turn to serious trading to prop up their equity, it is difficult to expect prices to recover in the short term."

The market needs fresh

money, said the broker. "Investors are expecting some of the dozens of foreign firms which have been authorised to enter the market to take a closer interest in buying, now that the prices have gone down," said the broker.

The 140-point mark in the AFM index is widely seen as a psychological point for most investors. At the same time, it is also seen as the point where foreign firms come to for holdings with hopes that prices could only go up.

## Business Daily Beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

## Fanek: Yen loans are the most expensive

ANALYST Fahd Fanek says Japan gave Jordan soft loans at one-per-cent interest, but practically the loans are costlier than any other credit due to the appreciation of the yen over the past few weeks. Noting that Jordan's dollar loans have been written off and that the rest of the loans are mostly denominated in yen, mark, pound sterling or French franc, Dr. Fanek said Jordan's debts at the end of this year will be higher due to the rise in the value of these currencies. He affirmed that even if repayments or rescheduling of debts were to take place, the exchange rates, especially for the yen, will enlarge Jordan's indebtedness. He explained that the yen appreciated by 10 per cent against the dollar and, as such, Japan was taking 11 per cent instead of the actual one per cent interest. Consequently, he said, had all our loans been in dollars, it would have been more merciful than having them in yen at low interest. Dr. Fanek said prices of imports from Europe and Japan will be higher, due to the rise in exchange rates of currencies, and that would lead to inflationary pressure in Jordan. The analyst said the national income grew by 5.5 per cent and the gross domestic product registered a 5.7 per cent rise last year. Exports and imports, he added, increased by 16 per cent in 1994 while imports dropped for the first time by 3.7 per cent (Al Ra'i and Al Aswaj).

THE FRENCH hotel group Accor intends to invest \$55 million in Jordan over the next four years. The investment will be channelled to build five-star and four-star hotels, providing 1,500 rooms, in Amman, Aqaba, Petra and the Dead Sea area. (Al Ra'i and Al Aswaj)

THE CONSUMER Protection Society appealed to the prime minister to reconsider a government decision to exempt 50 per cent of the customs on the paper used by the press. The society appealed to the premier to exempt all the paper from customs to enable newspaper weather the international price rise of paper and shelf plans to increase the price of newspaper. (Al Dustour)

INTERBANK RATES rose to 5.5 to 6.5 per cent range from 6.0 to 6.5 with funds available as the Central Bank reduced compulsory di- ar reserve requirements by one per cent, dealers said. The central bank's move to reduce the compulsory di- ar reserve requirement from 15 to 14 per cent of deposits made more funds available and put pressure on the overnight rates," said Firas Alasadeh, a dealer at the Arab Banking Corporation. Dealers say funds were also available from maturing certificate of deposit bills that some banks have not re- owed. High liquidity in the system sent rates down last Wednesday from an 8.0 to 5 per cent range at the start of that week. Central bank certificate of deposit yields of 0 to 8.5 highs last week are well above rates in the interbank market. (Al Aswaj)

THE JORDAN Industrial Resources Company signed five export agreements, from mid-December 4 until March '95, for a \$4.3 billion. The exports are fat, oils, glycerine and carton boxes. The company is currently negotiating with other foreign parties to export about \$5 million of products. (Al Aswaj and Reuters)

STATISTICS SHOW out of 12,000 private industries in Jordan, 87 per cent are small industries employing less than five workers. Those employing twenty workers and above are about 15 industries (Al Aswaj).

## AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

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ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (18/03/1995 - 22/03/1995)

WEEKLY REPORT

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK P.C.	367,742	128.000	128.000	126.250
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	111,450	4.420	4.420	4.350
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	35,375	4.250	4.250	4.260
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	19,599	1.400	1.400	1.400
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	1,046	2.720	2.720	2.640
THE HOUSING BANK	120,807	6.020	6.020	6.020
JORDAN KIWAT BANK	206,304	2.920	2.920	2.900
JORDAN GULF BANK	52,574	1.220	1.220	1.210
ARAB JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	7,000	3.520	3.520	3.500
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	127,413	3.740	3.740	3.760
BUSINESS BANK	81,815	3.220	3.220	3.300
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	23,246	3.780	3.780	3.650
BEIT ELAAL SAVINGS/INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	10,981	3.050	3.050	3.000
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	327,457	1.080	1.080	1.070
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	18,605	1.250	1.250	1.230
<b>BANKS SECTOR</b>	<b>1511947</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 157.67</b>	<b>CHANGE: -0.58%</b>	
JORDAN INSURANCE	6,500	3.400	3.400	3.250
ARABIAN SEAS INSURANCE	3,290	1.950	1.950	1.850
JERUSALEM INSURANCE	840	4.100	4.100	4.160
JORDAN PREMIER INSURANCE	138,782	2.450	2.450	2.540
YARMOUK INSURANCE & REINSURANCE	3,100	3.100	3.100	3.100
HOLY LAND INSURANCE	2,725	2.550	2.550	2.400
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	1,300	2.600	2.600	2.400
<b>INSURANCE SECTOR</b>	<b>156534</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 134.73</b>	<b>CHANGE: -1.25%</b>	
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	49,932	1.530	1.530	1.570
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	52,137	1.480	1.480	1.480
JORDAN HOTEL & TOURISM	416,825	6.900	6.900	6.850
JORDAN RIVER GENERAL	1,400	2.900	2.900	2.800
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	321,473	5.000	5.000	5.090
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS / NEW	41,001	4.700	4.700	4.850
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	78,209	3.130	3.130	2.940
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	9,478	2.050	2.050	1.920
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	3,136	1.100	1.100	1.120
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	5,538	0.880	0.880	0.910
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALRA'Y	20,170	11.750	11.750	10.400
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODITY TRADING	61,858	2.320	2.320	2.290
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	43,524	3.480	3.480	3.350
JORDANIAN EXPATRIATES INVESTMENT HOLDING	11,648	1.380	1.380	1.380
<b>SERVICES SECTOR</b>	<b>1176483</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 127.35</b>	<b>CHANGE: -2.53%</b>	
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	7,440	28.000	28.000	25.900
ATTANQUEP CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	1,526	1.100	1.100	1.060
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	198,549	2.960	2.960	2.990
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW	24,908	4.900	4.900	4.500

JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	21,944	9.350	9.350	9.230
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	9,109	3.580	3.580	3.470
THE JORDAN WASTELESS MILLS	180,402	7.420	7.420	7.400
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	287,392	4.110	4.110	4.030
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	22,410	6.000	6.000	5.890
JORDAN DAIRY	4,661	2.100	2.100	2.110
THE JORDAN PAPER MANUFACTURING	25,107	2.700	2.700	2.400
JORDAN PAPER & CARDBOARD FACTORIES	12,000	4.000	4.000	4.000
THE PUBLIC KETING	2,324	2.850	2.850	2.920
SPINNING & WEAVING	18,215	2.530	2.530	2.500
RAPIA INDUSTRIES	155,880	2.750	2.750	2.730
DAR AL DAKA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	209,765	7.800	7.800	7.400
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	25,714	0.870	0.870	0.850
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	429,516	6.400	6.400	6.350
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	98,826	0.660	0.660	0.620
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	47,784	1.390	1.390	1.390
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	13,503	3.450	3.450	3.400
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	13,560	2.040	2.040	2.000
JORDAN ROCCONOL INDUSTRIES	15,805	1.060	1.060	1.100
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & WATER/JINCO	12,086	0.670	0.670	0.640
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	2,700	4.550	4.550	4.550
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	15,029	1.500	1.500	1.320
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	34,966	2.340	2.340	2.100
KANTHER INVESTMENT	1,045	1.650	1.650	1.550
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	227,786	4.040	4.040	3.530
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	76,134	1.950	1.950	1.980
<b>INDUSTRIAL SECTOR</b>	<b>2196103</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 118.38</b>	<b>CHANGE: -1.18%</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>5041069</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 139.32</b>		

<b>PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (18/03/1995 - 22/03/1995)</b>				
<b>WEEKLY REPORT</b>				
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
CENTRAL GENERAL TRADING & STORAGE	28,202	0.890	0.890	0.880
JORDAN TRADE FACILITIES	33,777	0.750	0.750	0.740
SARFA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	42,827	1.390	1.390	1.400
UNITED CO. FOR ORGANIZING LAND TRANS.	96,220	2.010	2.010	1.950
ARAB FIN. INV. CO.	141,083	0.910	0.910	-0.890
ARAB FOOD & MEDICAL APPLIANCES	6,227	1.030	1.030	1.000
NATIONAL CHLORINE INDUSTRIES CO. LTD	19,835	1.500	1.500	2.470
NATIONAL TEXTILE & PLASTICS IND. CO.	15,273	1.070	1.070	1.040
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	72,153	1.580	1.580	1.550
EL-SAY READY WEAR MANUFACTURING CO.	21,423	2.250	2.250	2.150
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	41,407	1.520	1.520	1.490
UNIVERSAL WEALS	607	1.670	1.670	1.590
JORDAN STEEL	22,579	0.940	0.940	0.930
ARAB ELECTRIC INDUSTRIES	10,615	0.840	0.840	0.860
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>562900</b>			

## Coffee prices drop

LONDON (R) — Brazil's apparent failure to unite its own growers and exporters on coffee policy has sparked a drop of more than five per cent in world prices, traders said.

This also threatens to undermine producer efforts to stabilise the market, they said.

London robusta coffee futures fell to \$3,000 per tonne on Friday compared with \$3,170 on Wednesday.

Traders said differences within the coffee industry in Brazil, the biggest exporter, undermined the market and triggered a technical sell-off. "It was the detonator that set off the bomb," one analyst said.

At issue is whether Brazil should adopt export quotas if weak prices require that nation, with others in the Association of Coffee Producing Countries, to implement an agreement to curb world supply.

On Thursday, growers disagreed with the idea of export quotas only a day after exporters said they backed them.

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## Financial Markets

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Previous Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	313.30	7.60	Silver	4.68	0.110

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 23/3/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6180	0.6900
Sterling Pound	1.8410	1.0865
Deutsche Mark	0.4905	0.4930
Swiss Franc	0.5915	0.5945
French Franc	0.1384	0.1391
Japanese Yen	0.7795	0.7792
Dutch Guilder	0.4373	0.4395
British Krone	0.0000	0.0000
Italian Lira	0.0402	0.0404
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000

Other Currencies

Date: 23/3/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dir	1.8100	1.8120
Lebanese Lira	0.041750	0.042850
Saudi Riyal	0.1231	0.1241
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3000	2.3500
Omani Riyal	0.1878	0.1891
Egyptian Pound	0.1850	0.2085
Omani Riyal	1.7790	1.7910
UAE Dirham	0.1868	0.1878
Greek Drachma	0.2695	0.3285
Cypriot Pound	1.4445	1.5525

## LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.4038/48	Canadian dollar
	1.4062/72	Deutschemarks
	1.5754/64	Dutch guilders
	1.1644/54	Swiss francs
	28.99/03	Belgian francs
	5.9645/95	French francs
	1735.00/0	Italian lire
	88.50/60	Japanese yen
	7.3025/25	Swedish crowns
	6.2630/80	Norwegian crowns
	5.6019/69	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.5974/84	
One ounce of gold	\$383.20/383.60	

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## Anand a threat to Kasparov for world chess title

LAS PALMAS, Canary Islands (AP) — India, where chess originated about 1,500 years ago, has never had a contender for the World Championship. Until now.

Viswanathan Anand of India, the 25-year-old who defeated 20-year-old American Gata Kamsky Wednesday to win the Professional Chess Association candidates final series, is a clear threat to defeat PCA world champion Garry Kasparov.

The two are to play in September in Cologne, Germany, for the world title.

British grandmaster Nigel Short, who was destroyed by Kasparov in the PCA 1993 World Championship match, rates Kasparov a 60-40 favorite. Likewise for British grandmaster Michael Stean and Dutch grandmaster Gert Ligterink.

Those odds are still pretty good against the almost-unbeatable Kasparov.

"If you look at Kamsky's results and at the very strong players he's beaten and then at this match, Anand came out one class stronger. He will be a formidable opponent. Kasparov will have to play to his full strength and even then the outcome is not clear," Stean said.

Anand defeated Kamsky 6.5-4.5, winning Wednesday's 11th game on the 50th



Viswanathan Anand of India (left) is congratulated by Canaries tourism president after he won the PCA final series (AFP photo).

move to clinch victory when Kasparov resigned. The win was sweet for Anand, who lost to Kasparov last year in a qualifying match for the rival FIDE title.

World chess is split into two bodies, the PCA and its older rival, the World Chess Federation, which is known by the French-language acronym FIDE.

Anand has a reputation as a tactical genius who delights in unfathomable complications.

He is also one of the fastest moving players in top-level chess, often taking less than an hour to finish his moves.

An easy going person who smiles often and readily makes himself available for interviews, Anand on Thursday was more reserved when asked about his chances against Kasparov.

"I haven't had a chance to think about it — maybe in a week," Anand said.

Kamsky, meanwhile, is not part of the picture. Kamsky is scheduled to face Anatoly Karpov later this year for the FIDE world title. A victory there would make him the world's youngest-ever world champion.

A win against Karpov — a reasonable possibility — would also put him in a "remuneration" match that has been agreed on in principle by FIDE and PCA for 1996.

## Cricket also has a Michael Jordan

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad (AP) — Both athletes have special shoes created for them and reported seven-figure paychecks to show for it.

Both are superstars in their sports.

But Chicago Bulls basketball star Michael Jordan had never heard of Australian cricket hero Shane Warne when the two met last summer for the shooting of a couple of Nike commercials — Jordan's for the "Air Jordan" and Warne's for the "Air Flipper."

Americans may not know him, but the blond Australian has been widely hailed as the "Michael Jordan of cricket" since bursting into prominence in the last couple of years with a lethal ball-throwing style.

The 25-year-old Warne is star bowler, cricket's equivalent of a baseball pitcher, for Australia's national team, which is currently dueling the West Indies in the Caribbean.

"He's probably the greatest spin bowler of all time," says Everard Gordon, a Trinidadian cricket expert who played professionally in England in the 1960s. "He can do stuff with the ball you have never, ever seen before."

With his yellow hair, blue eyes, rosy cheeks and playful smile, Warne looks like a surfer. But the angry scab on his arm earned diving for a ball and the diamond stud in his left ear attest to how he earns his paycheck.

Warne came very close to not making it in professional sports. Smoking a Benson and Hedges by a hotel swimming pool on a recent practice day, he said his dream had been to play Australian rules football, but the husky six-footer (1.8 metres) was cut from the Melbourne team because he was too slow and too short.

"When I got the axe, I thought, what do I do now? I didn't want to work," So Warne signed on with a pro cricket team in England, then landed a spot on the Victoria State squad in 1990.

Dropped after one season, he played on a youth team for a year and was called back up to the state team for four games before the national team grabbed him for the 1991 series against India.

The going was rocky. "I got smashed all over the park," confessed Warne. "I got dropped to 12th man," the lowest active position on the squad. Dangling by his fingertips, he trained hard for the 1992 season, travelled with the team to Sri Lanka and led it to victory. Back in Australia playing for Victoria, he played the "game of a lifetime" in December 1992, and found himself promoted for good.

"That was where my life turned around," said Warne. "It gave me a burst of confidence. I started believing in myself."

Since then, Warne has climbed to the top of the game, shutting down batsmen with his unusual ball-throwing style.

He tries to send curve and knuckleballs instead of fastballs — only his deliveries have names like the leg spin, left arm spin, wrong in, googly and his trademark flipper, a vicious pitch with topspin that bounces upward in front of the batter.

Adjustment to sudden success has brought some growing pains, Warne confessed. In India earlier this year he "snapped," exploding in rage at a batsman and shouting expletives heard on TV sets around the world. He was fined for his behaviour, in addition to being thoroughly embarrassed.

Warne plugs an Australian-New Zealand jeans company called Just Jeans and is an off-season personality on Australia's Channel 9, which broadcasts cricket in the land down under.



Al Ahli's team

## Ahli to represent Jordan Arab Clubs Championship

### Naghaway: We aim for a top two spot

By Aileen Bannayan  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan's basketball champions Al Ahli Saturday leave Amman for Cairo to take part in the Arab Clubs Championship competition in which 15 top teams will be participating March 26 - April 8.

Rivalry is expected to be quite tough, but Al Ahli, the Kingdom's champions for the third consecutive year, seem undaunted by the challenge. They are one of the top teams and are aiming for nothing less than the title.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Ahli chairman Adnan Naghaway sounded confident his team was ready to take on the best of the Arab World.

"We have been training hard. Our lineup is complete. We are definitely eyeing a top two standing," Mr. Naghaway Friday told the Jordan Times.

"Our team groups players whose dedication has enabled them to become the country's top team. I'm very optimistic about the upcoming competition," he added.

Indeed Al Ahli's form has been steadily improving ever since 1990 when they clinched the Jordanian championship away from all-time rivals Al Orthodoxy who had an undis-

puted reign over the basketball scene 1976-1980.

With the recruitment of Ukrainian coach Alexander Sasha, Al Ahli altered their style to a faster, up-to-date game, and with the presence of a mighty lineup of veterans and younger promising players they were able to win the title over the past three years after Al Orthodoxy won the trophy in 1991.

Mr. Naghaway said Al Ahli were also preparing to represent Jordan in the Asian Club's Championship which will be held in Malaysia in September with ten countries taking part.

Al Ahli, who will be representing Jordan for the first time, have received JD 5,000 from the ministry of youth for their participation in the Arab championship.

The participating teams include three Egyptian teams: Championship titleholders Al Jazireh, current league champions Al Itihad of Alexandria, in addition to Egypt's Al Ahli. Other teams are Al Zahra' of Tunisia, Al Shariqa of the United Arab Emirates, Kazma of Kuwait, Al Riyadi and Al Hikmah of Lebanon, Al Mina' of Yemen, Bofarique of Algeria, Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia, Al Tabah of Morocco and Al Widad of Morocco.

## Cantona free on bail as fan pleads 'not guilty'

CROYDON, England (R) — A soccer fan assaulted by Manchester United's French star Eric Cantona during a match in January pleaded not guilty on Friday to using abusive behaviour during the fracas.

Matthew Simmons, a 20-year-old window fitter from South London, appeared in court in Croydon a day after Cantona was sentenced to two weeks in jail for assault.

Simmons was granted unconditional bail. He will appear again in court on May 23 for a trial before magistrates on two counts of using

abusive words and behaviour during United's January 25 Premier League match against Crystal Palace at their ground in Croydon.

Simmons' hearing, which is expected to take three days, will take place at the same time and in the same building as that of Cantona's teammate Paul Ince, who will be tried on a common assault charge arising from the same game.

As he left court, Simmons was knocked to the ground by cameramen and journalists who have besieged the courthouse for two days.

Simmons has already had to change his address after threats by Manchester United fans.

Cantona, who had pleaded guilty to common assault, was freed on bail on Thursday pending an appeal against a sentence that many Britons considered too harsh. While nobody questioned Cantona's guilt — his two-

footed lunge has been shown on television time and again — seven out of 10 callers to a TV programme thought the punishment was too stiff.

Of 22,723 calls to a GMTV telephone poll on Friday, just 30 per cent agreed with magistrate Jean Pearch's decision to send the temperamental French star to prison.

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## Orthodoxi's women's basketball team leaves for Damascus today

By Aileen Bannayan  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Women's basketball players at Al Orthodoxy Club are another Jordanian team travelling abroad this week as they leave for Damascus, Syria Saturday to play a series of friendly matches with local teams.

Jazireh's women and Ahli's men's teams are also playing in Cyprus and Cairo making it a busy month for many of the country's top basketball players.

Al Orthodoxy, who only lost their crown to Al Jazireh in 1993, are the reigning women's champions and have a new younger lineup representing them. The team includes Shireen Ahn Khader, Hind Al Ghouri, Ghadah and Dima Qandah, Lubna Al Masri, Aheer Batshnan,

Yara Kheir, Nadine Kishish, Dana Dallal, Zein Ammani, Samar Mdanat, Zeena Farah, Ellen Shaddad, Maha Al Naber and Muna Khalil.

Al Orthodoxy's men's team is also currently in Syria playing in a tournament dedicated to the late Basel Al Assad. Al Orthodoxy scored a 58-56 win over Lebanon's Al Riyadi and 71-58 over Neptune of Lebanon and lost 72-60 to hosts Al Jeish, and 60-52 to Egypt's Al Zamalek to finish third.

During their five-day visit, Al Orthodoxy's women will be playing four matches against Al Thawra and Al Jeish teams.

The visit comes as the Kingdom's women's teams prepare for the annual championship which was due to be held in mid-April.

However, the Jordan Basketball Federation

(JBF) this week abruptly announced that all the season's scheduled competitions which were set in circular to clubs earlier in the year, would be rescheduled soon.

The move was displeasing to teams who had completed their training and had scheduled their visits abroad to put the finishing touches on their preparations and tactics.

However the JBF explained their move saying it was in the best interests of national teams.

The men's and women's national teams are scheduled to play in the Asian Championships in July, while the Under-18 team who clinched third place in the Asian Championship, will also present the country in the World Championship which will be held in Greece in the same month.

## Jordan set to make debut at Bulls' new home

CHICAGO (AP) — Michael Jordan's legend helped build the United Centre. His No. 23 is retired in the rafters there. And a bronze statue of Jordan — soaring over a pitiful, faceless opponent — stands outside.

Finally, after repeatedly saying he'd never play a National Basketball Association game in any Chicago Arena except the old stadium, Jordan will make his United Centre debut.

Never comes when the Bulls meet the Orlando Magic.

"He made the statement that he didn't want to play here," teammate will perdue said after Thursday's practice. "But he was here practicing today and I think he's looking forward to it just as much as we are."

After working out at the United Centre for the first time, Jordan only briefly discussed his debut in the \$175 million facility, which

sits across the street from the old warehouse of an arena that housed so many of his magic moments.

"I'm not comfortable," he said. "It's still new to me."

Earlier in the week, he said: "It's good to be back home. It's like a kid going away from his family for a while; when he comes back home, they're happy to see him."

Jordan wears no. 45 now and said he will resist gazing up at his old number.

"I'm going to look at the court," he said. "That's all I need to know."

Still, he probably will

sneak some peaks into the crowd as he soaks up the adulation of what's expected to be the biggest turnout in Bulls history.

A team spokesman said all standing-room tickets have been sold, meaning that some 23,000 fans will cram into the United Centre.

Jordan, who retired in October 1993 after leading the Bulls to three consecutive NBA titles, began his comeback in Sunday's nationally televised game at Indiana. It turned out to be the most-watched regular-season game in Bulls history.

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Tom Hanks in <b>Forrest Gump</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9:15		Andy Garcia — Mee Ryan in <b>When A Man Loves A Woman</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:30, 8:30, 10:30		Comedian star: Adel Imam — <b>Bakht &amp; Andaleeb</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 <b>CONCORD '2'</b> Jean-Claude Van Damme <b>STREET FIGHTER</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:45, 11:00		Musa Hijazi "Sum'a" in the political satire <b>Hi Citizen</b> written and directed by Mohammad Al Shawaqfa daily on 8:30 p.m. The theatre closes on Monday — Halfa Al Agha in the children's play ☆☆ Sa'di's Return ☆☆	Presents <b>Abu Awwad</b> in the social comedy <b>Punctured Bag</b> The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: <b>AL SALAM YA SALAM</b> at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed Saturdays & Sundays





Pete Sampras

## Sabatini collapses as Sampras advances

KEY BISCAYNE (AP) — Near the end, pacing behind the baseline, Gabriela Sabatini actually put her hand to her throat.

In a collapse almost identical to her 1993 French Open failure, Sabatini blew a 6-1, 5-1 lead, double-faulted three times, squandered three match points and lost to ailing Kimiko Date in Thursday's semifinals of the Lipton Championships.

Date, bothered by a sore shoulder that hindered her serve and forehand, nonetheless rallied to win 1-6, 7-6 (7-2), 7-6 (7-4).

"When it was 5-1 (in the second set), I didn't feel very good," Sabatini said. "I was close to winning the match, but that wasn't the feeling I got."

Date likewise looked less than confident in advancing to the final against Steffi Graf.

"I never thought of winning," she said, "until the last point."

Remarkably, Sabatini also blew a 6-1, 5-1 lead two years ago in Paris. Mary Joe Fernandez survived five match points to win that quarterfinal match 1-6, 7-6 (7-4), 10-8.

Sabatini's career quarterfinals, top-ranked Pete Sampras shook off a code violation for arguing a call and came from behind to beat Andrei Medvedev, 6-1, 6-7 (5-7), 6-4. In the third set, Medvedev led 3-1 and had three break-point chances before Sampras rallied.

Unseeded swede Jonas Bjorkman celebrated his 23rd birthday by beating 30-year-old Mats Wilander 6-2, 1-6, 7-5. Wilander blew a 5-2 lead in the third set.

Sampras plays Bjorkman in the semifinals, and second-ranked Andre Agassi meets

Magnus Larssen.

Date's injury, a strained rotator cuff, could handicap her in the final Saturday against the second-seeded Graf, who beat No. 3 Jana Novotna 6-2, 7-5.

Date will probably be able to play, WTA Tour trainer Jill Gresley said. The injury has bothered her for about four years, and she aggravated it earlier in the tournament.

"I always have this problem," said Date, seeded seventh. "Once I have enough rest, I can go on."

Her 3-hour, 5-minute due with Sabatini was far from an artistic success for either player. On a hot, sunny afternoon, the restless crowd moaned, groaned and even laughed at the poor quality of shot-making.

There were a numbing 148 unforced errors — 79 by Date and 69 by Sabatini. But the 115-pound Date stayed fresher in the 85-degree heat.

"Physically she was much better than me," Sabatini said. "That was the difference."

The fifth-seeded Sabatini's double faults all came in the final two sets. She double-faulted to lose the second-set tiebreaker, then did it again to lose the second, sixth and 10th games of the final set, giving up the lead each time.

As Sabatini fell behind in the second tiebreaker, she wandered near the baseline, looking stunned and exhausted and rubbing her throat with her right hand.

Earlier she had appeared on her way to an easy win, especially when Date called for a trainer to attend to her aching right shoulder at the end of the first set. Date clutched her shoulder almost every time she missed a serve or hit an unforced error.

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## JORDAN HANDBALL REVIEW

### Hamdan: Limited budget hinders further development

By Roufan Nabhas  
Special in the Jordan Times

AMMAN — It is the same old story with all our sports teams and their federations. The same reasons forbid them from participating in international championships thus keeping them away from experience and international challenges. The culprit is of course financial support.

As probably the third popular team sport in the Kingdom, handball has been trying to gain a firm foothold among Jordanian sports fans and players. Yet, while teams flourish in the local scene, Jordanian handball teams have yet to score a memorable achievement.

In the interview with the Jordan Times, chairman of the Jordan Handball Federation (JHF) Dr. Sari Hamdan said handball teams in Jordan faced a series of problems that hinder them from attaining fair results. "The absence of effective administration in clubs coupled with financial problems are the biggest

obstacles."

Last year, the Kingdom's national women's handball team got some belated attention when they fared well in a championship that included national teams from Cyprus, Iraq and Syria.

Nevertheless, many players are not satisfied with the team, its current situation and with their future as national players representing the country.

Rana Al Lahham, one of the most experienced players who has been a member of the team since 1987 but is now thinking of quitting the game soon, said that "being a member of the national team is a great opportunity, but it will all the problems and setbacks we feel we can do no more."

"Financial support is the main thing," she continued. "In addition many players who live outside Amman face the problem of transportation and have much trouble just to be in time for practice."

Dr. Hamdan stressed that the federation is restrained by a certain budget

which is mostly spent as salaries for the referees. "Last year the federation spent most of its JD 10,000 budget on referees fees. We therefore do not have enough funds to send teams abroad for championships. However, this year we obtained JD 14,000 budget for the JHF and we hope to have the support of companies," Dr. Hamdan added.

Another problem that faces our teams is the "absence of new faces, some young blood to take over when older players quit the game," another national team player Haifa Awad said.

"We need new, young faces to take over because the current players cannot give more time," Dr. Hamdan said that the federation is aware of this problem "that is why 1995 will be the year we will seek to discover younger players committed to the game."

"The best example of this is the Under-18 basketball team who took third place in the recently concluded Asian Championship. They scored a big achievement.

So we are taking chances and we are working on choosing a team with young, promising players.

"Our hope is to find a team which will continue what our veteran players achieved on the national level," he added.

But still the problem that needs a solution is how to overcome the financial obstacle?

Dr. Hamdan hopes Minister of Youth Dr. Awad Khleifat, who extended the ministry's support in teams like Al Faisali in the Arab Cup Championship and Al Ahli in the Arab Clubs Basketball Tournament in Egypt, will continue his support to the rest of the teams.

"The minister of youth is paying a great deal of attention to the teams and their needs. We have an upcoming handball championship for women which will be held in Korea. This is an example of the national team's problem as this is a great opportunity to play with great teams such as China, Japan and Hong Kong. But we lack financial support."

Dr. Hamdan pointed out that there are only four women's teams who are competing annually: Orthodoxy, Ahli, Kufroum and Hussein Irbid. When Al Ahli club decided to cancel its team because of financial difficulties, a new club, Al Istiqal, took over Al Ahli's players hoping to build a new team utilizing the experience of Al Ahli's players.

On the other hand, the situation of the men's handball teams is in better shape as they have more teams, more support and more chances to compete.

However, the Jordan Shield Championship, which was recently organized for the first time, faced a lot of problems with many clubs withdrawing and making the event less competitive for the remaining teams.

"This year the federation issued stringent rules which will punish the withdrawing teams and relegate or suspend them for two months," Dr. Hamdan added.

"In the past, the team

was only punished by paying a JD 50 fine which some teams found it easy. But now it is a different story."

Meanwhile, clubs continue their task of nurturing the game despite lack of incentives and proper funding.

Yarmouk Al Shouneh club organized the spring championship Friday, March 24th with first division teams: Ahli, Arabi, Hussein, Salt, Amman, Tareef and Jaleel, in addition to Madaba, Kufroum, Orthodoxy, Bareha, Qoqazi and Um Jozeh from the second division and Horrich from the third division.

Dr. Hamdan agreed that handball's achievements on the regional level were but a few and that resulted in less international game experience which also limits the players' ability to upgrade their standards or score memorable achievements. The main reason again seems to be financial support, a problem the Kingdom's sports federations keep on facing as they seek to best execute their local and international agendas.

## NCAA basketball glance

By the Associated Press

### ★ East Regional

#### Regional semifinals

Wake Forest (26-5) vs. Oklahoma State (25-9)

Tulsa (24-7) vs. Massachusetts (28-4)

#### Regional championship

Sunday, March 26

Semifinal winners

### ★ Southeast Regional

#### Regional semifinals

North Carolina 74, Georgetown 64

Kentucky 97, Arizona State 73

#### Regional championship

North Carolina (27-5) vs. Kentucky (28-4)

### ★ Midwest Regional

#### Regional semifinals

Memphis (24-9) vs. Arkansas (29-6)

Kansas (25-5) vs. Virginia (24-8)

#### Regional championship

Sunday, March 26

Semifinal winners

### ★ West Regional

#### Regional semifinals

UCLA 86, Mississippi State 67

Connecticut 99, Maryland 89

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## GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF  
& YAMMAN HIRSH  
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### ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠Void ♠9 ♠QJ108532 ♠J884  
The bidding has proceeded:  
North East South West  
1 ♠ 1♣ 2 ♠  
What action do you take?  
A.—First, all good hands start with a redouble. Once you have grasped that principle, the right bid becomes obvious. Jump to three diamonds. That is preemptive, showing a long suit with limited values and no defense to speak of.

Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠J8854 ♠Void ♠865 ♠KQ952  
The bidding has proceeded:  
North East South West  
1 ♠ 1♣ 2 ♠ 2 ♣  
What action do you take?  
A.—Three clubs is quite possibly your best spot, but there's no way to play there! That bid would be forcing and could lead to total disaster. Pass, before you get into deep trouble.

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠Q105 ♠Q8 ♠A9 ♠AQ10852  
The bidding has proceeded:  
North East South West  
1 ♠ 1 ♣ 2 ♠ 2 ♣  
What do you bid now?  
A.—Let's eliminate the bids you can't make. Three clubs would describe a sub-minimum two-over-one response; two no trump would be invitational; you are a trump short for a jump to four hearts. That leaves two spades or three no trump and our vote goes for the

latter—it is more descriptive and less fancy.

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠86 ♠K5 ♠KQ873 ♠8782  
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What action do you take?  
A.—Regardless of whether your range is 10-17 or 10-18 you have the values for an invitational raise to two no trump. It is the fifth diamond that swings the pendulum in favor of a raise if you play the weaker range.

Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠8 ♠J942 ♠AK83 ♠7643  
The bidding has proceeded:  
North East South West  
1 ♠ 1 ♣ 2 ♠ 2 ♣  
What action do you take?  
A.—You have a rather good hand, considering your one-no-trump response. With four-card trump support and two quick tricks in diamonds, at the very least you can partner a raise to three hearts and we wouldn't criticize a full-blooded jump to four hearts.

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠K83 ♠A75 ♠42 ♠K10952  
The bidding has proceeded:  
North East South West  
1 ♠ 1 ♣ 2 ♠ 2 ♣  
What do you bid now?  
A.—If your two-over-one response was not a game force, you have to jump to three spades—the hand has too many prime cards to risk losing in a partial. If you've adopted the modern style, two spades is enough. That's forcing and discouraging rebids thereafter should damper partner's ardor.

## Seles not ready to join U.S. Fed Cup team

KEY BISCAYNE (AP) — Martina Navratilova is back. Monica Seles may never return.

Seles said she's not ready to join a U.S. Fed Cup team that will include retired pro Navratilova in its first-round match April 22-23 against Austria at Turnberry Isle near Miami.

New Fed Cup Captain Billie Jean King reached the exclusive Seles by telephone before announcing the team.

"I talked to Monica last night," King said Thursday. "She doesn't know if she'll ever play tennis again. One of her dreams is to play Fed Cup, and to be in the Olympics."

Seles, Guenter Parche, is being retired this week in Germany. He was convicted in the first trial but given a suspended two-year sentence and set free.

Speculation had been building recently that Seles, 21, would return to tennis this spring. But there's no basis for such speculation, said Anne Person Worcester, chief executive officer for the WTA Tour.

"Nothing Monica has said has indicated one iota that she is considering a return," Worcester said. "The fact we're all in a frenzy about it shows how much she means to women's tennis."

King also plans to talk with Jennifer Capriati and 14-year-old Venus Williams about joining the Fed Cup team.

Along with Navratilova, who retired from the WTA Tour last year, the lineup against Austria will include Lindsay Davenport, Gigi Fernandez and Mary Joe Fernandez.

King announced the team prior to the women's semifinals at the Lipton Championships.

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